QUESTION

O F

QUESTIONS;

WHICH

RIGHTLY RESOLV'D,

RESOLVES all our

QUESTIONS in RELIGION.

This QUESTION is,

Who ought to be our Judge in all these Differences?

This Book answers this Question: and shews a most easy and safeWay, how, among so many Religions, the most unlearn'd and learn'd may find the True.

By JAMES MUMFORD, PRIEST, of the Society of JESUS.

Call for one Simon, whose Sirname is Peter, and he will tell thee what thou oughtest to do. Acrs x. 5, 6.

THIRD EDITION.

Permiffu Superiorum.

LONDON:

Printed in the Year, MDCCLXVII.





The four chief Points handled in this Book.

The first Point.

THAT there must be some infallible judge, or rule to decide all necessary controverses, to whom all are bound under pain of damnation to submit their understandings.

Quest. 1.

The fecond Point.

That the scripture is not this infallible judge, or rule appointed us by God, to end all our controversies.

Quest. 2.

The third Point.

That the church is the judge, appointed by God, to end all our controversies in faith. Quest. 3.

The fourth Point.

That the church, which is the infallible judge in all controversies, is the Roman church, and therefore all are bound to submit to ber. Quest 4.

A 2

A

A Table of the several Questions and Sections, into which the four foresaid Points are divided.

The Question of Questions:

WHO ought to be our judge in all controver-

The Preface.

The importance of this question, and how easily even ignorant people may come to be fully resolved in H, all being reduced to four only points. Pag. 9

Ouest. I.

Whether there must be some infallible judge or rule, to decide all necessary controversies, to whom all are bound under pain of damnation to submit their understanding? and bow orderly we proceed in the finding out this judge.

Pag. 15

Ouest. II.

Whether the scripture be this infallible judge or rule, appointed us by God, to decide all necessary controversies?

Pag. 22

Sect. 1.

Containing five proofs, that scripture is not this judge, or rule.

Sect. 2.

The scripture contains, not plainly all things necessary to be believed, or done to salvation. This is showed by fourteen examples. Pag. 39

Sect. 3.

By scripture, we know not which books are canonical scripture, which not. Neither is scripture known to be Gods word, by its own light. Wherefore, protestants do not believe scripture with divine faith.

Pag. 55
Sect.

The Table.

Sect. 4.

That the scriptures cannot decide this controvers, which books are the true uncorrupted copies of the true books of scripture. And therefore, protestants believe not scripture with divine faith. A word of the samous bible now publishing at London.

Pag. 75

Sect. 5.

That scripture cannot decide this controversy, which translations of the word of God are true? and therefore ordinary protestants, cannot believe scripture with divine faith.

Pag. 97

Sect. 6.

That the scripture cannot decide the controversy about the truth of St. Matthew's Gospel. And that our adversaries do not believe this gospel with divine faith.

Pag. 112

Sea. 7.

That the scripture cannot decide the manifest controversies about the true sense thereof; therefore in the belief of the true sense thereof, our adversaries have no divine faith, nor sure ground out of their religion.

Pag. 118

Sect. 8.

Diverse other necessary points not contained in, or decided by scripture. Pag. 143

Sect. 9.

A four and twentieth necessary point not contained in scripture. Pag. 154

Sect. 10.

By the texts which our adversaries bring to prove, that scripture contains and decides all necessary controversies, we prove the contrary. Pag. 162

Sect. 11.

Although scripture only should be our judge: yet this judge would decide many points clearly against you. Pag. 186

The Table.

Sect. 12.

That boly fathers never allowed scripture for the only rule of faith Pag. 189

Queft. III.

Whether the church be the judge appointed by God to end all our controversies. With a word to the Socinians, concerning reason being our judge.

Pag. 195

Sect. 13.

It is declared what we understand, when we seek whether the church be our judge or no. Pag. 198

Sect. 14.

It is proved out of the Old Testament, that the church is our infallible judge in all controversies of faith.

Pag. 201

Sect. 15.

It is proved out of the New Testament, that the church is our infallible judge in all controversies of faith.

Pag. 213

Sect. 16.

The fame is proved by feveral reasons. Pag. 244

Ouestion IV.

Which is that church, which is the infallible judge in all controversies? how she exercises ber infallible judgment? and what submission is due unto ber?

Pag. 268

Sect. 17.

Whether the Roman church be that church which is our infallible judge? Pag. 270

Sect. 18.

In what court this infallible judge decides our controverses in faith? Pag. 273

Sect. 19.

This court in deciding controversies, rules berself by the word of God, written and unwritten. And why she rules berself by tradition? Pag. 284

The Table.

Sect. 20.

That the fathers teach these traditions, and the definitions of councils or church to be infallible.

Pag. 303

Sect. 21.

That the fathers teach in general the church to be infallible. Pag. 312

Sect. 22.

That all which the fathers say of the infallibility of the church in her traditions or councils, or in general terms, is meant by them; particularly of the Roman church, as we understand the Roman church.

Pag. 332

Sect. 23.

Some things very necessary for the easier answering our adversaries objection. Pag. 339

Sect. 24.

Twenty objections of an university man, against the infallibilety of the church, and also some others are solved. Pag. 339

Sect. 25.

The Roman church baving been proved to be our infallible judge, all under pain of damnation, are bound to submit to ber judgment.

Pag. 359

A Table of some particular Matters, incidently treated in this Book.

OF reading the scripture, and using divine service in the vulgar tongue, Quest. 2. Sect 1. Num. 10.11.

Of doing good works for bope of reward, Queft. 2. Sect. 4. N. 6.

Of the great difference in fundamentals, between the Roman Gatholics and Protestants, Q. 2. S. 2. N.

A Table.
13. p 52. and Q. 2. S. 7. N. 7, 8, 9, 10, &c.
p. 118
Of the necessity of baptism for children, Q. 2. S.
Of the fast of Lent, Q. 2. S. 8. N. 8. p. 153
How Protestants are obeated by their ministers,
Do Jay to them, Come with us, and you shall fee
evidence of scripture for all you believe and do.
and bow Roman Catholics fee better reason for what
they believe and do, than Protestants, Q. 2. S. 2.
N. 13. p. 52. Q. 2. S. 4. N. 7, 8. p. 85. Q.
5. 6. 7. 8. 0. 10. p. 125 Q. 2. S. 16. N. 7.
5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. p. 127. Q. 3. S. 16. N. 7. p. 261
That the power of judging ecolesiastical affairs,
belongs not to the lay, Q. 4. S. 18. N. 3. p. 276
It is a fin to marry after vowed chaftity, Q. A. S.
20. N. 4. p. 307 Faith is more affuredly grounded upon tradition,
Faith is more affuredly grounded upon tradition,
sban upon upon manifest miracles, Q. 3. S. 16. N. p. 256
p. 256
No circle in the refolution of faith, made by the
Roman Catholics, Q. 3. S. 16. N. 6. p. 259. The
Protestants circle, Q. 2. S. 3. N. 13. p. 73
How the belief, even of ignorant Roman Catho-
lies comes to be infallible, Q. 3. S. 16. N. 7.
What it is which makes our faith infallible; the
we have no infallible knowledge of this infallibility,
Q. 4. S. 23. N. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, &c. p. 344
Prayer for the dead, better grounded than bap-
tilm for children. O. a. S. to. N. a. p. 280. Allo
letter grounded, than the faith by which Protestants
believe the Apocalyps to be scripture p. 290. They
better grounded, than the faith by which Protestants believe the Apocalyps to be scripture p. 290. They were beld for Heretics who denied prayer for the
100ap. 201. The church foined with the coston.
The distance of the grade in the Anthre gays In-
Messessaid Octoober on's Protochats, 122.8, and

THE

QUESTION of QUESTIONS.

Who ought to be our Judge in all Controversies?

THE PREFACE.

The importance of this Question, and how easily, even ignorant men, may come to be fully resolved in it, all being reduc'd to four only points.

I. CAINT Anselm has a very fit similitude to express, how much a contentious spirit, in disputing, does blind the understanding from seeing that truth, which a peaceable fearch, free from all prejudice, does easily discover. He tells us, that a little before fun-rifing, two men in the open field fell into a hot debate, concerning that part of the Heavens, in which the fun was that day to rife; they pass'd so far in their contention, that falling first together by the ears, they at last pull'd out one another's eyes; whence it happen'd, that when after the fun had rifen, neither of them both could fee a thing fo clear as was that part of the Heavens. in which the fun did shine so conspicuously to all men who had eyes. To our purpose, many thoufands there be, who knowing zeal in religion to be laudable, and having a most prejudicate opinion of

the truth of that religion, in which they were from the first use of reason bred up, and which brings many temporal benefits unto them; they stand so hotly to the maintaining thereof, that their passionate affection quite puts out that clear eye-fight of reason: Whence it comes to pass, that when the truth is no less clearly set before the eyes of their understanding, than the brightest sunshine is set before our corporeal eyes, they are not in case to behold it, tho' men of mean capacity would most evidently see it, when they have laid aside all passion and prejudice, and with a calm and humble mind, begged of Almighty God, grace to embrace that sincerely, which upon diligent search, they should understand to be truth. He, who thus

feeks, shall not fail to find.

II. I know the multitude of controversies which have been rais'd this last age, and the manifold difficulties with which they are now grown to be intangled, do make the fearch of truth feem an impossibility to the ignorant, and over-wearisome to the most strong and strugling wits: Therefore, no books feem now more necessary, than such treatises which handle the main question of questions, upon which all other particular questions fo wholly depend, that the true folution of it does necessarily draw with it the folution of all other controversies which are, or can be. This question of questions is, Whether God, out of his most fincere desire to bring all fouls to that happy eternity, for which only he created them, has not left us some judge upon earth to end all our otherwise endless controversies? And who this judge is? For the incomparably greater part of those souls, for which Christ has shed his most precious blood, being unlearned, his providence had been defective, if the means of ending controversies in points necessary to falvation, had been so hard to be applied, that it had been

out of the vulgar reach. It beseemed therefore the divine providence, to leave us fuch means as should be both eafy for all men to use (that so all men might, by the use of them, come to the end which God so earnestly desires) and should also be most fufficient for our safe direction. For, to provide us of easy means, which had been infufficient to direct us fecurely, had not been to his, or our purpofe.

III. We must say then, that God has provided us both of means sufficient to bring us securely to the knowledge of that Truth, which is necessary for the Salvation of our Souls; and we must fav alfo, that this means is sufficiently easy to be duly used, and apply'd by the far greater part of the world, confisting of unlearned people. For if it were not sufficiently easy to them to apply it duly. fo as by it to attain to that true belief, Without which it is impossible to please God. (Heb. 11. 6.) It would also be unprofitable unto that end for which God did give it them. This is most agreeable to reason, and also to those most comfortable words of scripture, (Esai 35.) Say to the faint-bearted, take courage and fear not. Bebold God bimself will come and will save you. Then the Eyes of the Blind shall be opened, and the Ears of the Deaf. And there shall be a Path and a Way. and it shall be call'd the Holy Way. And this shall be unto you a direct Way, so that Fools cannot err by it. These words must be made good, and therefore such a way must be given unto us. And it must not only be a way direct in itself, but also it must be unto us a direct Way, and that so direct, that even Fools cannot (except wilfully) err by it. This way was promis'd to be given us, as it is there faid, when God himself should come and fave us, and provide better for our falvation than he had done for thole of either the Law of Nature, or Jewish Law. Our labour must be to find out

out this way. And this must not be hard, even to the Ignorant. For it had been to small purpose, to provide somewhere in this vast world, a way so direct for the guidence of the ignorant, without the means to be put in this way, were also sufficiently easy, even unto them, as ignorant as they are. See my second section, also, the 3, 4,

5, 6.

IV. I intend then (by the grace of God) in this Treatise to shew, that this way may be easily found out, by only fatisfying ourselves in the true resolution of this Question of Questions, leading us to know affuredly, Who is to be our fudge in all our Controversies appointed to be so by God bimself. For when we have once found him, all Controversies cease of what questions soever; for without all controversy, we must follow this Judge, appointed by God, to no other end, than to make an end of all our controversies by his clear sentence: Whence Dr. Fern, in his 27th fection: Indeed, such a Judge or Umpire of Christendom would (if to be bad) be a ready means to compose all differences, and restore truth and peace. We will then endeavour to shew that fuch a Judge is to be had: And our prime care shall be to proceed so clearly, that a man of ordinary capacity, may carry away the substance of our whole discourse, which, for this effect, we draw to four points only. First, I shall shew that we must have some infallible Judge, or Rule, deciding all our necessary controversies, to which rule we will shew all men bound under pain of damnation to fubmit, even with interior fubmission of judgment. Secondly, I will shew at large, that the scripture is not this judge or rule, which point will require a very full examination, because our adversaries ground themselves mainly in the contrary opinion, and all our new fects have no other

ground at all. I will shew Thirdly, That this infalible judge can be no other (as things stand) than the true Catholic church; and this must be also fully handled, because it is the ground of our religion, and the true resolution of the question of questions depends wholly on it. Lastly, I will fhew, that all the arguments, which convince the true Catholic church to be this judge, do convince the Roman, and no church but the Roman, to be this infallible judge, to whom all consequently must be bound under pain of damnation to submit their judgments, and accordingly live united to her communion. This bleffed union will end our controversies.

V. Indeed this question of questions truly refolved quite undermines the foundation of all fects opposite to the Roman church, shewing us a most easy, and yet a most safe way, how, in these times, the most learned and unlearned may find the true religion, to wit, by following the judgment of that judge, whom God has appointed them in all doubts of religion to follow. And therefore, in this infinite confusion of new-fangled fects, this question (though never so often handled heretofore,) seems now more necessary than ever, even, although I should do nothing else but publish new copies of old arguments; fuch copies being now fo very necessary to be thrust into every man's hand. My best endeavours shall aim at making these arguments truly public; that is, to fet them down so plainly, and in so vulgar and clear language, devoid of school terms, that ordinary people may fully conceive and perfectly understand the force of them. If my endeavours in this can be successful, I hope this work.

14 The Importance of this Question, &c.

work, after so many other men's writings, will not be unseasonable at least for the vulgar. But they must have patience with a long answer to a most important and ample question.

inch, there is an everywhere, when consuce the interest of the consuce of the interest of the interest of the consuce of the c

-it slatt escallarip to montes a suit bestall to permit the same about the same and the same about the same abo

The fall head area of the property to improgram.

el uson most, vocas dum sumbanumia tio be vers esse in a sed of valleries rev also as sed tion-suppressed the els sed also

or the outer and of the first ending the best per bet the first of the first of the property of

were the state of the state of the state of the state of

Trans

will car our contractories.

THE

QUEST. I.

Whether there must be some infallible Judge or rule to deduce all necessary controversies, to whom all are bound, under pain of damnation, to submit their understandings? and, how orderly we proceed to the finding out of this judge.

HIS question is put in the first place, rather for order fake, than for any debatable difficulty which it contains. For all christians, of what religion foever they be, do agree in this, that there must be fome certain and affured means to end all controverfies or doubts, which either be, or can be in religion. The reason is apparent, because otherwise every man might be left free to believe what he judged best, and so we should soon have as many religions as there be private and different judgments. Truth is but one: wherefore, though all these different opinions may be falle, yet it is manifest that (though they be thousands) but only one of them can be true. For whofoever differs from this one opinion which is true, differs from the truth. St. Paul tells us (Heb. 11. 6.) Without faith it is impossible to please God. That is, it is impossible to please him without true faith; for he is not pleased with falfe faith. Without we please God, it is imposfible to be faved; and you fee it is impossible to please him without true faith. And again you fee that true faith cannot be found in quite contrary persuasions, of which one only can be true; there must therefore be some means to know this one true faith from so infinite a multitude of falle opinions. What means is this? The and alshau attout a visit the

2. It must be a means infallible, as all christians agree, but Socinians. For if it be fallible, all religion may be a fancy. Christian faith is an infallible assent, to which no fallible means can bring us. This means therefore must be infallble. Hitherto we all agree. See Whitaker Cont. 1. 2. 1. Cap. 8.

3. All also cannot but agree in this, that our inward understanding must be bound, under pain of damnation, to submit itself to that infallible judge. or rule, appointed by God to decide all necessary controversies. For if you, in your private judgment, without any fault at all, may follow what you really think fittest to be followed; why may not I, as well as you, and another, as well as you or I, follow what really feems fittest to be followed? Wherefore, it were to no purpose at all (in order to the prefervation of unity in faith) to have an infallible judge, unless every man in particular were bound, by a most strict precept, to submit to that judge. Again, he, who should not submit to an authority, acknowledged to be appointed by God to fuch an end, should manifestly resist to be governed by that means, by which the divine providence had decreed to govern him; which is a damnable rebellion against God; and an act of high treason it is against the Divine Majesty, to refuse to stand to the judgment of that judge, or determination of that rule, which God has placed for no other end, but for all to stand and submit unto it, that by this submission they may be guided infallibly to that one true faith, without which it is impossible to please God, or be faved. Now because all faith essentially consists in the inward understanding (which is the very seat of true or false faith) God, who looks upon our interior foul, exacts to fee in that a ready embracing of that faith, without which no falvation is to be had; and therefore he should not seriously defire our falvation, unless he defired that we interiorly vielded.

yielded full affent to this one and only faving faith: which faith confisting essentially (as I said) in the interior judgment, God would have this judgment readily to fubmit to that infallible judge's determination, appointed by him, as the only means to bring us affuredly to this one true faith. Things which are necessary to please God, must of necesfity be things of precept and strict command, even under pain of damnation, because our very greatest obligation, of all obligations, is to obey his will and pleasure. And his sacred pleasure is, to exact that most at our hands, which is most for our good, and which makes most for our salvation. True faith therefore being a necessary means to bring us to our eternal good, he, with all reason, exacts of us all, to fubmit our interior understanding (the very feat of true or false faith) to the full affent of that which shall be prescribed us to believe, by that means which his holy providence shall assign us, for our guidance in faith, that fo all may be united in faith interiorly; for indeed, otherwise, they are not of one faith at all. And hence again appears that this means must be infallable; for it is not posfible that God should put a command upon all to follow that which might lead to any error, great or little.

4. Out of this general doctrine, received univerfally without any confiderable contradiction, there follows manifestly this consequence, that two men, of two different religions, cannot be saved, if both of them know what doctrine is taught them by that infallible judge or rule, appointed them by God to be followed, as their guide, in matters of faith. For both these men, knowing on the one side, that God has put an obligation upon them, to submit to the believing of that which is proposed by his infallible judge or rule; and yet, on the other side, one of them statly refusing to believe what is thus proposed unto him; this one, who proceeds thus, must needs be guilty of the damnable sin of refractory disobedience against the express command of God, obliging strictly all to submit to the judge appointed by him to guide all to the necessary true faith, and known to be so appointed. Hence it is scripture; He who does not believe shall be damned, Mark 16. v. 16. And of those who follow sects, St Paul saith, Gal. 5. 20, 21. They who do these

things, Shall not obtain the kingdom of beaven.

5. These principles I lay down so distinctly in the beginning, and will again inculcate at the ending, that all may fee of how high concernment it is to make use of this means, wholly necessary to that only true faith, without which it is impossible to please God, and to be saved. They therefore are in a damnable case, who being strictly obliged to use that means, which is wholly necessary to come to the knowledge of this only true faith; do not inform themselves carefully to find out this means appointed by God to guide and direct all to this only true faith; either fondly believing, that men of contrary religions may be faved (which we have just now proved to be false, except in case of invincible ignorance) or elfe, by damnable negligence, omitting to use that ferious care in feeking out, and folicitously searching the knowledge of this means. which they are obliged to do, in a matter concerning a no less business than an eternity of everlasting blifs, or never-ending mifery. Now, left any one should secretly despair of finding out this means, and so grow flack in the fearch of it, (which is the lamentable case of many thousands) I (in my preface, at the beginning) took care to shew, that even ignorant people might, by a very tolerable care, come to the knowledge of this means, or elfe God had not fufficiently, according to his most sweet providence, provided for the far greater part of those fouls fouls, for whose salvation he died, intending to save them all, by first bringing them to the profession of this only true saith; and consequently, intending to leave them some certain means to come to the knowledge of it, by such diligence as is very tolerable to human frailty, and very possible to us,

as ignorant as we are.

6. What then is this means? It is (as I said in the beginning of this question) to follow some infallible judge or rule, directing us plainly and clearly to the knowledge of what God would have us believe; to whom we are all bound, under pain of damnation, to submit our understandings. But who is this judge or rule? This is the queftion of questions. Here we, and all protestants, and all other fectaries notably difagree. They all fay, that we are obliged to follow, and admit no other infallible rule than the scripture, which scripture they all affirm to be a rule sufficient, by itself alone, to tell us fo plainly and fo clearly, all that is necessary to salvation in matters of faith, that w need no other means to direct us in this point. We, who are Roman catholics, hold the scripture to be. indeed, a rule infallible, and to which all are bound,. under pain of damnation, to submit their understandings; but we have very many, and very convincing reasons, which move us to believe, that God did not intend the holy scripture to be, by itself alone, our only guide in matters of faith necessary to falvation, as I shew by five proofs in the first. fection. Moreover, we fay, that we stand in need of some other infallible guide, to know many things necessary to falvation, which are not clearly let down in scripture; and I shall shew no fewer than twenty-four, all not to be known by scripture, which does not tell us which books be the true word of God, which be not; which be true uncorrupted copies of these books, which copies befalse

false and corrupted, and in what places they be corrupted. Here comes in an unanswerable difficulty about St. Matthew's gospel. Again, we stand in need of another infallible guide, to tell us which is the true, certain, and undoubted fense of these true copies, and which is not: For, from hence arise almost all our greatest controversies. Again, because our adversaries, without such an infallible guide, different from scriptures, can neither infallibly know which books be the true word of God. which be not; nor which be the true original copies of these true books, which not; nor which the true traflations of the true originals; nor which is the undoubted fense of these true originals or copies, and which is not. Hence we conceive it impossible for them truly to believe fcripture, with that divine faith, which is grounded always upon divine revelation, and is wholly necessary to salvation. Whence we hold ourselves only to be the true believers of scripture; for we believe it with that faith which rests upon divine revelation. Moreover, by our adversaries arguments, alledged out of scripture, to prove it to be the only rule of faith, sufficient by itfelf to decide all necessary controversies, we prove, that it is not fuch a rule. Yea, though scripture were granted to be this rule, we from hence can prove, that it clearly decides many necessary controversies for us against our adversaries. But we hold, that for our rule, clearly deciding all necessary controversies, we must have a living judge, which the scripture is not; and therefore, the holy fathers, in their disputations against heretics, often refused to stand to scripture only. This infallible living judge, we fay, is the church, regulating herfelf in her determinations, according to the infallible rule of God's word; out of which word, she judged herfelf to be obliged also to rule herfelf according

to those traditions which the apostles did deliver by word of mouth only, and not by writing. For, the scripture not containing all matters necessary to falvation, but the apostles of Christ delivering some of these matters, only by word of mouth, she rules also herself in her definitions according to these traditions, knowing that those things, which the apostles taught by word of mouth, are no less worthy all credit, than what they taught by pen and paper. And by the same traditions, she is as sufficiently affored of what was delivered, only by word of mouth, as of what was delivered by pen and paper. Now, lest that in taking true scripture for false. true traditions for false, or in delivering the true fense of the one or the other, this church should be subject to error, we say, she is in these matters always affisted, in her public determinations, by the infallible affistance of the holy Ghost, promised to her for this end, to lead her into all truth. That chief court, in which she delivers to the people her infallible definitions, we all hold to be lawful general councils, in which the supreme pastor of the church precides. Neither does this church want means to make all her decrees evidently known to the people, to be her true decrees. And all this. which has hitherto been faid of the church in general, we shew to be verified only of the Roman church; of whom also all these prime things which the scriptures say of the true church are verified, and united in her alone. The Roman church. therefore, being this our infallible judge, appointed by God to end and determine all our controversies, all, under pain of damnation, are to submit their inward judgments and understandings to her decrees; neither are they in the state of falvation. who refuse to do it.

7. Here you have a brief fum of all our doctrine in general, and just almost in that very order that I

have

have delivered here so many important points, without bringing here any full proof of them. I shall now proceed to the full proof of all, and every one of these points here set down so briefly, to the end that thou mayest see how clearly we proceed, resolving first this question, Who is to be our Judge? by shewing in divers sections, that the scripture is not judge: And then shewing, that this infallible judge can be no other than the church: And thirdly, that this church can be no other than the Roman. And consequently, all that has hitherto been said, or hereafter shall be said, to agree to the infallible judge (whom we are now seeking out) is verified of the Roman church, and of no other.

QUEST. II.

Whether the scripture be this infallible judge or rule appointed us by God to decide all necessary con-

SECT. I.

Containing five proofs, that scripture is not this judge or rule.

LL protestants, and all that number less number of our new sectaries, do affirm, That the scripture, and only the scripture, by itself alone, is that infallible rule, by which all necessary controversies that are, or can be, are to be decided. As for the means to regulate ourselves in the knowledge of true and salse scripture, and for the finding the certain and undoubted true sense of the same, they make no other use of the authority of any church, or any general council, but to consider of what they say, and ponder how agreeable, or disagreeable, their opinions be to scripture; and then, if, by their private judgment of discretion, they, in their own under-

understandings, be convinced that what they fay, is agreeable to scripture; they, for this reason, give belief unto it. If they, by their private judgment of discretion, be convinced that what they fay, is not agreeable to scripture, they freely reject it, and disbelieve it. And this has ever been the proceeding of all antient heretics, and is ever like to be the proceeding of all heretics to come. For by this means, they all come to that, which they all defire; that is, to have that pass for truth, which each of them, in their private judgments of discretion, do think to be true, according to their manner of understanding the scripture. And they all trust more to their private understanding of the scripture, than they do trust to the interpretation of it, made by the greatest doctors, that ever the church of God had, for these thousand and fix hundred years, how holy or how learned foever they were; yea, more than they will trust all the chief pastors and prelates of the church, assembled in a general council, after they have, with all mature deliberation, confidered all the texts of scripture concerning fuch a point, and conferred them with the originals, and with other places; and after they have examined each bishop of each nation, of what they find to have been delivered to them by their ancestors, touching this point, by much prayer, and public fasts of all the church diffused, implored the affistance of Almighty God, to direct them to the knowledge of the truth in fuch a point. For, after all this done, and after all these prime, learned, and holy prelates of the church have, by full consent, defined such a point to be held as true, and that under pain of excommunication. Behold! when this decree comes forth, there will flart up some devout cobler, or weaver; he will take this decree into the one hand, and in the other he will take his English bible, trans-

e.

e

A

0

y

Y

ir

n

lated by some body (though neither I, nor he, have any affurance of his honesty or skill, or of the uncorruptedness of the copy, by which this English bible was translated) yet into his hands he will take it; and then fincerely he will make a review of this decree, or of the whole book of decrees, made by this, or by any general council. And then, if after his ferious perusal of the matter, his rude understanding, according to his private judgment of difcretion, does, in good earnest, think this decree (or all these decrees) to be contrary to the word of God (rightly interpreted by him) this man, according to the principles of our adversaries, may securely disbelieve this doctrine, though proposed by fo great an authority as I have faid; yea, though this authority, as they themselves say, be the very greatest authority upon earth. To relate this prodigious opinion is enough to refute it; and to thew how far more rationally we Roman catholics rather trust to the interpretation of general councils, which we, on the one fide, find seconded every where, by the authority of the gravest doctors of the church of God, according to their judgment of discretion, and the tradition and judgment, and perpetual practice of their ancestors. And then, on the other fide, we see our own selves, that all this is to the very full as much, yea, and far more agreeable to the word of God, according to our own private judgment of discretion. Wherefore in this respect, we are to the very full as well grounded as they, and we see as well what we do: But we infinitely exceed them in the advantage that we have, by following, not only our own, but also, a far better fighted judgment than our own, even in the use of natural reason, besides which reason, those general councils have a more special assistance of the Holy Ghost. And thus we persevere in all ages in all unity, whilft they in this one age, have fo run division

division upon the ground of scripture, that the meer relation of their feveral fects in this one age, with the several opinions of every sect of this age, fills whole books, which are to be feen in every flationer's shop. And it is a wonder, if any new year pass without one or more religions springing up, as long as this one principle passeth for current, and men may have free liberty to follow the confequences which manifestly follow from it, as of late they have it. If this daily hatching of religions happened not fooner, it was, because this liberty was not granted sooner. For, although their bishops held the doctrine, of giving all liberty, to follow in conscience what they, in their private judgments of discretion, held to be conformable to God's word; yet they, very inconfequently, forced their consciences to an exterior conformity, as long as their power lasted, for fear that should not last long, if men were permitted to practife what they were permitted and taught to believe.

2. But to go on more orderly, we say the bible, by itself alone, is not this judge, or rule, appointed by God, to decide all necessary controversies, without you take the bible as it, by many and very clear texts, fends us for more full instruction to the church. In this fense, it is most true, that the bible is a very sufficient rule, as hereafter shall be more fully declared. But we deny that, which our adversaries affirm, that the bible, taken by itself, does fuffice to decide and end all our controversies. This I prove first, by an argument so manifest, that, in these days, he must put out his eyes who will not fee the truth of it. For, who fees not now the bible daily confulted, place conferred with place, the best originals searched for, and looked for, and published more than ever; and yet, after this, who sees not that controverses, about the very chief

chief points of religion, are fo far from being leffened, that never was age feen or heard of, in which they multiplied more? No fooner had Martin Lutber broached this principle, that every man might take the bible into his hand, and follow that interpretation, which after due diligence used, he thought to be best; but presently, there sprung up an incredible number of different sects. For, An. 1526, Caroloftadius, Zuinglius and OEcolampadius began to preach that opinion of the facramentaries, which denies Christ to be really present in the sacrament (an opinion which Luther did curse until his very death.) The next year after Paciomontanus and Rothamannus, retaining other opinions of Luther, brought in Anabaptism. And these anabaptists are now grown, to be divided into twenty different fects, all described particularly by Spanbemius. In fine, Luther himself, and his disciples, did so tumble about their new religion, turning it with fo many chops and changes, that OEcolampadius objected unto them; If we reflect upon your diffentions, surely, there are almost found among you Seventy-seven changes. Equa responsso ad Lutherum. Præfat. Their chief permanent sects were, the Antinomians, Osiandrians, Majorists, Synergists, Stancarians, Amsdorfians, Flavians, Substantiations, Ascidentarians, Adiaphorists, Musculans, Pseffringians, Ubiquifts. So much for Lutherans.

3. Now in the year 1538, John Calvin, a disciple of Zuinglius, despising his master did set up of himself, adding many opinions to that of the sacramentarians. This man's religion and his disciples began so quickly to be divided, and subdivided, into so many sects, that Luther did live to write thus of them: I scarce ever read of a more deformed heresy, which presently, in the beginning, was divided into so many heads, such a number of sects (mark what follows) not one like another, and such variety and disagreeing

disagreeing of opinions. Tom. 7. f. 380. And in another place he adds, Six or feven feets of them to bave risen in only two years space. Tom. 6. f. 335. Thus much could Luther say of their very beginnings. We, at this day fee, that his English disciples, can ring the changes as well as any of their fore-fathers, fo that now every family is like a house, in which the master speaks high Dutch, the Mistress French, the children, one Spanish, one Irish, one Scottisto, and some servants Welch, some Japonian, some Polonian, &c. And all this Babilonian confusion proceeds from this one principle, of thrusting the bible (in the vulgar language) into every hand, with teaching them this principle, Behold, here is the only rule, God has given you to rule yourselves by; and by which every one is to judge for himself, which is true doctrine, which is false; after he has used such industries, as shall be declared, Sect. 2. n. 13. Though even after the use of all those industries, we see with our eyes no end present, nor ever like to be made of our controverfies still encreasing, and encreasing like snow falling from a mountain.

4. A fecond reason, much illustrating and declaring the former (because it discovers the true original cause, why we should see no controversies ever ended, by standing only to the sentence, given by God in the bible) is this, that whilst we take thus the scriptures, for our only rule, and God, as he speaks by the scriptures alone, for our only judge, we needs must fall into a vast confusion. For every one of us having our private judgments, as different almost from one another, as our faces are, and these judgments being fo very weak in hard and high matters, how can it be, but that presently, we should come to frame different judgments of the true fense and interpretation of that sentence, which we find given by God in scripture, as shall be very fully

S.

f

0

rt

d

g

fully declared, Sea. 7. Well then, in this variety of judgments you fay, we may refuse to stand to the interior embracing of that interpretation, which is made by the gravest general council that can be gathered upon earth, unless perusing the definition of this council, we, in our private judgment of difcretion, judge it conformable to the word. But if (after use of such industries as you require) we, according to our private judgment (so very various and fo very weak in points fo hard) do really think the definition not to be conformable to scripture, then, you fay, we may interiorly dissent from it: and yet it is true, that all faith confifts in the interior affent. Whence it follows, that the last rule which is followed, when all comes to all, is the fcripture, not taken as it founds (for that we all reject) but taken in that fense which our private judgment (for this is your doctrine) draws from it. This is that, fay we, which opens a wide gap to all sectaries, and D. Fern, in his 13th Sect. in vain labours, to shew the contrary by telling them, they must bring evident scripture and demonstration against public authority of the church: and that upon diffent and gainfaying, they must undergo the church's censures; which censures, according to our adversaries doctrine, shall nothing hurt your foul. And he concludes, that there is no other means to preserve unity proper to the church. But questionless, this means is most ineffectual, which both experience teacheth us (as I have just now shewed) and the very consideration also of the nature of the means. For this means must, at last, be applied by men, that is, by those, to whom nature has given as different judgments in their understandings, as affections in their love and wills. Well now, when this weak, this most fallible, and most various understanding, has got into his hands the rule, by which only every one is to be directed in faith, what

n

I

ti

h

0

h

e

n

[-

if

-

IS

k

,

:

1-

e

e

9-

te

t.

0

n

y

2-

be

0

r

ıt

h

d)

ne

y

en

as

en

noy

h, at what can we expect, but that, as every one's judgment is different, lo allo will the faith of every one be. And every one believing that to be evident, which he judgeth to be fo, every one will fincerely fay, that he brings evident demonstrations of scripture, and therefore he contradicts public authority upon as good ground as you did, when you (at your division from the Roman church) did contradict, not only her authority, but also, the public known doctrine of all other churches, which God had visible at that time upon the face of the earth. Tertullian wittily faith, What was lawful to Valentinus was awful to the Valentinians. As lawfully as Luther, Zwinglius, Calvin, and others, did feparate from all the prelates and pastors of the church of their age; so lawfully, at the least, the Lutherans, Zwinglians, Calvinists, may separate from them and their few new prelates and pattors, and may, according to the example which thefe men gave them, make themselves independents, and cast off this remnant of dependency, not only of higher prelates, but also of all inferior curates: for this is but to go on consequently to the example given unto them.

5. But for the importance of the matter, I will further declare this by a clear example, which may hereafter be useful to us. Let us take an Arian cobler, and give him one great principle more of Dr. Ferns, that his part is the negative; for, he denies the affirmative doctrine of those who teach, that God the son is of the very self same substance with his father; and that consequently, our church must shew him evident scripture for what we affirm. If you tell him, the great council of Nice has unanimously declared the sense of these words in scripture, I and my father am one thing, to be this, That God the son is one and the self same substance with his father, though yet he be a different person:

Well, will he fay, I reverence councils very highly, yet I must peruse their decrees, and consider how conformable they be to scripture. I beginning to do this, began to ponder, how God the father and his fon are one thing; being they be quite different persons? and surely, this different personality, in all reasons, should be a different thing. How then, (faid I,) are they one thing? Is it not, perhaps, the true meaning of these words, that they are one thing only by affection, as I have often been told by our great doctors? This I can eafily understand; I will see a little further, whether this interpretation, conferred with other texts of scripture, may not be found to be very good. I conferred it with the text, which one of our doctors cited out of John 17. 21. where Christ prays to his father, That all his disciples may be one thing, as thou father in me, and I in thee. Here I marked, that Christ demanded, that his disciples might be one thing, as be and his father are one thing. Now, eevery body fees, that Christ never begged, that his disciples might be one thing in substance with him. Hence, I manifestly conclude, that I now am not convinced of my negative opinion, for which I have all human reasons; but contrarywise, I bring for my opinion, the evident demonstration of scripture, against the public authority of the council of Nice. Wherefore, if the followers of that council prefs me to make public profession, That God the son is of the fame substance with his father, I may, and must gainfay them all. Good doctor, either convince this Arian cobler, or give us better fatisfaction why you deny that these, your principles, open a gap for sectaries, and even such sectaries as overthrow the foundations of true religion, as you confess this Arian belief does. And just as this cobler proceeds in denying this confubflantiation, so you proceed in denying transubstantiation. Only he, who denies consubstantion, has incomincomparably stronger reasons, and better authority of scripture for himself. Of this review of coun-

cils, see Sect. 18. n. 5, 6.

,

t

e.

•

3

1.

t

e

1

e,

e.

ne

ne

n-

an.

ny

es,

ns

es.

n-

b-

125

m-

141507

6. A third reason, why we say scripture not to be our only judge, is, that our very adversaries confels, no one book of scripture, nor no certain number of canonical books, to be our judge: but they fay, the whole canon, or all the canonical books together, make up the only rule, by which we are to be wholly directed. Now, if this be fo, that you will have us judged by all canonical books, then you must agree to tell us, which books, for certain, be those, which belong to the making up the whole number of canonical books. For, it is a most just request to ask of you, By what judge you would have us to be judged? You fay, by all canonical books: Give us leave to ask how many, and which books they be? Your English bible thrusts out of the canon, and placeth among the apocrypha, some half a score books, which we hold for canonical. Again, your English bible takes into the canon of scripture, divers books which your Lutheran brethren cast out; as the Fpistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews, the Epistle of St. Fames, the second Epistle of St. Peter, the second and third of St. John, the Epistle of St. Jude, the Apocalyps or Revelation. We then fay unto you, agree at least first, by which books you would have the canon to be compleatly made up, and then press us, by your arguments, to be judged by them alone. This, at least, we have reason to say; but we conceive ourselves also, to have reason to exact of you, to demonstrate unto us, that the books of Maccabees, (by which we prove Purgatory, and the other books which you are pleased to discanon, do not belong to the making up of the true canon. Yet when you have done this, or allowed us all these books for canonical, we shall ton we have upon thered it appears not. St. Maisnot have the number of books requifite to make the full canon. Hence follows:

7. A fourth reason, that many, and very many of the canonical books of scripture have quite perished, and not fo much as appeared in the days of the very antient fathers; fo that nothing but the names of these books are come unto us. Adamus Contzen in his proemial questions to his commentaries upon the four gospels, 2. 4. §. 8. does not only affirm, but most solidly prove, that no fewer than twenty feveral books of scripture have thus wholly perished. Serrarius does the same. I will give you the names of some of these books. In the book of Numbers, c. 21. v. 14. we read thus; It is faid in the book of the wars of the Lord. Where is this book? It is quite perished. In the third book of Kings (which you call the first) c. 4. v. 32. Solomon spoke three thousand proverbs: And bis canticles were a thousand and five. Where be these books? What a small part have we of them? In the fecond book of Chronicles, c. 9. v. 29. it is faid, Now the rest of the acts of Solomon first and last. are they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah, and in the vision of Iddo? Where be these three several prophets books? They are all quite perished. the first book of Chron. ends with these words. Now the acts of David the king first and last, behold be they not written in the book of Samuel the feer. and in the Book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the feer? Where also are these several prophets books? They are quite lost. In the last to the Coloffians St. Paul commands to read in the church the epistle from Laodicia. Where is it? It appears not. He also in his first to the Corinthians C. 5. v. 9. faith I wrote to you in an epiftle. Where is this epiftle to them which he wrote before the first that we have unto them? It appears not. St. Matthew

t

tì

n

thew (whose Hebrew gospel is now quite lost) in his 27 Chap. v. 9. cites words spoken by the prophet Feremy, which are not to be found in all Feremy, as we now have him. Wherefore, part of Feremy the prophet is also perished, as Contzen on this place excellently proves out of Chron. 2. c. 35. v. 26. St. Matthew also, c. 2. v. 23. faith, It was Spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazaren. The books of those prophets who spoke this are also perished, for we find Christ never called a Nazaren in all the prophets books which we have. Whence St. Chryfostom, writing on this place, Homil. 9. in Mat. faith, Many of the prophetical monuments have perished; for the Jews being careless, and not only careless, but also impious, they have carelesty lost some of these monuments: Others they have partly burned, partly torn in pieces. So he. Now, those books, which the fews, out of impious malice, burned, or tore in pieces, are most likely, to have been such, as they did see the apostles to cite most for the proof of Christian doctrine; as also, it appears, by their making away the prophets books, cited by St. Matthew. See St. Justin against Tryphon, shewing that the Tews did make away many books of the Old Teftament, that the New might not feem to agree with it, as it should.

8. Well then, by all this it is manifest, that many, and very many books of scripture, have quite perished, besides those many, which you yourselves, thrust unjustly out of your bible. Will you have us now, in all our controversies about necessary points, be wholly judged by all the books of the scripture? Then produce them all, that we may know what is written in all of them. For, who can doubt but many things, as necessary as others that are in the books we have, were written in these books which we have not?

-

,

e

e

15

e

Especially the Yews maliciously, being most likely to have destroyed those books first, which contained the most clear places for our religion. Where is it written that all things necessary to be believed, are written in the books which we now have? Cite me a text proving this, and I have done. Nay, you yourselves teach, that all the whole body of the books of scripture is required, to give us those points which are necessary to salvation: And the reason is, because you cannot assign any particular books, or particular number of particular books, containing clearly all these necessary points. Yea, we shall prove, that there are no fewer than twenty-four necessary points, which are not contained in any of those books of scripture which we have, whether they were contained in the books which have perished, no man but a prophet can tell; or if they were, then (now at least) fince they are perished, we cannot know these necessary points by them. Yet, these points being necessary to be known, God must provide us of some other means to know them.

ir

g

ec

in

N

pu

all

pre

Ar

leg

anf

Vin

our

q. A fifth reason. If either all the books of scripture, or some particular number of them, had contained the only necessary direction, for every man to guide himself by, in all points necessary to falvation, it cannot be doubted, but the apostles, who spent all their labours and lives, in seeking the falvation of fouls, and who knew very well, that, on the one fide, true faith, in matters necesfary for belief and practice, was wholly necessary to the falvation of every one; and knew alfo, on the other fide (as you must fay) that the only means appointed by God, for their necessary direction in this necessary faith, was the scripture, and nothing but the scripture, by which every man was to judge for himself; it cannot, I say, be doubted, but they (had this been true) would either themfelves

selves, have procured the scriptures to be put into fuch tongues and languages, as the vulgar people of fo many different nations use, and only understand; for without their understanding the scriptures, it is impessible to direct themselves by them. and without they direct themselves by them, it is impossible to be rightly directed to the knowledge of that faith, without which it is impossible to please God. The apostles knew this to the full as well as you, if it be true; and yet we could never hear. that they took fo much as the least care by themfelves, or charged their fuccessors to take the least care to turn the scripture, either all, or that part which is fo wholly necessary, into such languages as the feveral people of these several nations (which they converted) did use: neither could we ever hear, that their successors (so very well instructed by them did ever take the least care to do this, fo wholly necessary to be done, if your doctrine be true. Yet you all deny, that their immediate successors, did set forth our Latin vulgat edition, which is the most antient of all Latin editions, St. Peter and St. Paul, living fo long in Rome, caused no part of the bible to be translated into the Romish language: yea, St. Paul writes to them in Greek.

10. Some answer, that the apostles took this care, because they writ the greatest part of the New Testament in Greek. And then, they being put to prove that Greek was understood, either by all, or by the greater part of the world, they prove this most pitifully, by only citing, Tully pro Archia Poeta, saying, Græca omnibus fere gentibus leguntur. Greek is read almost in all nations. I answer, that as we commonly say, that Tully and Virgil in Latin, are read in all nations; and yet, our meaning only is, that the more learned fort in

all nations read these Latin books: So, in this fense, Tully may, so much the easier, be supposed to have said, Greek was read almost in all nations, because he added the word almost even then, when he delivered this his faying in an encomiastical oration, in which orators make freest use of amplifications, and hyperbolical exaggerations, ever without any restrictions at all; especially when fuch amplifications be for their turn, as here it was for Tully's turn, because he was to shew that this man (though a Greek poet) could by his Greek poetry make the Romans famous, Greek poets being read, by the learned fort of the neighbouring nations, and the fame among the learned of those nations being chiefly to be regarded. And either, in this usual sense, Tully must be understood; or else flat scripture must be denied. For the scripture, AA. 2. intending, on fet purpose, to give us the names of feveral people, whose languages were all different one from another, at the beginning of the church; names, Pontus, Cappadocia, Asia (minor) Phrygia, Pamphilia; all which places are fituated between that city, which now we call Constantinople, and the city of Antioch, in which town Tully, faith that poet, which he undertook to praife, was born. Within that compass also is Galatia, which St. Ferom testifies to have had a language somewhat like to that of Trevers. Now, if even in these places, where a man, by Tully's words, would most imagine the Greek tongue to be the vulgar language, it is manifest (by scripture itself) that it was not so; surely, we have all reason to imagine, that in remoter parts, both in East, West, North and South, it was in few places, the vulgar language, in respect of the far greater part of the world. Call here to mind how much you use to cry out against us, for using our common public prayer in Latin, though this language

t

b

b

fa

8

10

W

fo

bl

ly

H

W

gu

de

un

language be fo common among all well-bred people; and yet this, our common public prayer, is a thing only offered to God, for the people of all nations; and not a thing spoken to the people of all nations, for their necessary instruction, as you say all the scripture was. And moreover, mass is offered up by a priest, who understands the language in which he offers up these public prayers: But the scripture, especially the New Testament, is delivered to every one of the people (as you teach) for every one to judge by it for himself, what is necessary for him to believe, and to do, to work his falvation; and this is his necessary direction appointed by God to be fo. Why then do you not cry out much more against the apostles, and their ill instructing their successors in so important a point, as was the communicating or delivering to the people of all nations, in fuch languages as were known to all nations vulgarly and commonly, that very rule of faith, so wholly necessary for their direction, that all other means are accounted by you fallible, and confequently infufficient to bring forth an infallible affent, fuch an one as true faving faith must be. But the truth is, that the apostles knew well enough, that oral tradition, joined to the daily profession of the faith so delivered, and to the daily practice, answerable to what they so professed, would abundantly suffice tor the sufficient communicating of God's infallible word to all nations.

t

-

1

)-

15

es

1-

a,

es

ıll

ch

ok

is

a

w,

y's

to

ip-

ve

oth

ew

far

ind

ing

this

age

The fews in their captivity at Babilon, did wholly lose the vulgar use and knowledge of the old Hebrew tongue, in which the law and prophets were written, and ever after spoke Syriack, a language mixed with Hebrew and Chaldean, and wonderful sew by their private study did so much as understand Hebrew. This is testified by your own

C 3

great-

greatest doctors of antiquity, who now are fetting forth that admirable bible at London (of which I shall speak, Sect. 4. n. 8.) in their introduction they say, Certum est ante Christum nullam suisse versionem Syram. It is certain, that before Christ's time (and some time after) there was no scripture translated into the Syriack language. So that for fourteen generations, the Fews had not the bible in their own vulgar language: But the law and prophets were read in their fynagogue, and the pfalms were fung in a language which the people no more understood than they now understand Latin. This was done before Christ's own eyes. and he never found fault with it. An evident proof of the lawfulness of prayer in an unknown tongue, and that God gave not the Jews the scripture only for their rule or judge; for then it would have been judged necessary to have been translated into Syriack, the only tongue they understood. Let us go on. Yet, before we proceed, let us note by the way; how foon you came to call your public fervice into question, when once you had got it in your vulgar language; every vulgar fellow prefumes to cenfure it; yea, it has in your courts been arraigned and condemned; and is fo vulgarly contemned, that scarce any minister dares offer to read it. But we must proceed to other matters. It was a serious along al your tests

meither bast, and the subsequent in a constant Habitation is a little of the subsequent of the subsequ

ente militaria de carea estan la california de la california de californ

an word to all mathematic

Sect. 2.

A fixth argument, That scripture contains not plainly all things necessary to be believed, or done to salvation.

e

e

e

e

-

i,

n

)-

d

-

d.

15

11

d

1-

11

o

es

15

A.

This is here shewed by sourteen examples.

R. Fern, in his Sect. 22. tells us: That ferip-I ture contains all things of themselves necessary to be believed or done to falvation: not expresty and in fo many words, but either so, or else, deducible thence by evident and sufficient consequence. And in his Sect. 26. What is necessary to life and faith is for the most part plainly set down. I suppose he fays it is fo, for the most part, because formetimes it is only deducible by consequence, which must be evident and clear; as a little after, he fays. And yet, for fear all this should come short, he prefently adds, That things thus necessary are not deducible, all by every one that reads: but it is enough if done by the pastors and guides, which God appointed in his church to that purpose, using the means that are needful to that purpose; such as is attention and diligence in search of the scripture, collation of places, and observing the connections, also sincerity and impartiality in the collection or deductions which they make, also prayer and devotion for affistance in the work. Thus he, very discomfortably for the far greater part of the world, who (though most unlearned) are most preposterously by protestant doctors invited; yea, declared to be commanded, to read the scriptures, to the end they may plainly know by themselves, what is necessary for them to be believed and done to falvation; and yet, here they are plainly told, that these necessary things are not all, but only for the most part, plainly fet down :

down; and though they be deducible from fcripture, Yet they be not all deducible by every one that reads; but it is enough if done by their pastors and guides. What, by them all? No, not by them all but only fuch as have used all these great diligences here expressed: To which he ought to have added several things more, as perfect skill in Greek and Hebrew, with the perufal of the true, and certainly true originals; which diligences, with all these conditions, one minister amongst one hundred useth not, and those who have used it, cannot be evidently known by the people to have used them; and though they could be known to have done so, yet they should be known to have used means that are fallible. How then grow thefe confequences to be evident? Yet all the people are all to hold fuch consequences evidently deduced; and yet without they themselves use these means (impessible unto them) they cannot know the evidence of this deduction. For how should they know it evidently? And yet again, these poor good people are most preposterously taught, to prefer the doctrine of their ministers, thus, and only thus deduced, (even, according to their own confession) before the quite contrary consequences, deduced by incomparable better means: For what our church teacheth in her general councils, is deduced from God's word by most skilful and most learned prelates, affembled from all parts of the world, bringing with them the best scholars that can be got by them in the world: All chiefly having regard to what was first delivered with their first faith. Moreover, all the christian world is still helping them by their prayers, all the time they are affembled. Again, the very conference of such men with one another, is a thing wonderfully helping to the finding out truth; to fay nothing of the supernatural affistance of the Holy Ghost,

Ghost, made far surer, by promise of Christ to them, than to any private ministers: What then more unreasonable than to forsake them to follow these?

2. But let us go on. The world confifts of people, commonly not very learned: For thefe men, God must have provided some way, to know clearly what they are obliged to believe, and to do for their salvation. For many things which are to be believed, are most hard to understand: And many things must be practifed, which are very hard to be done. And the belief and practice of these things must oblige all the world, as long as the fame shall continue. Now to oblige all for ever to this, without giving them means to know plainly and clearly, what they should believe or do, had been a thing unreasonable, in so sweet a providence, as that of our heavenly Father is. This obligation then, in every particular point, which is necessarily to be believed and done by us, for the obtaining heaven and avoiding hell, must be clearly intimated to us all, even in all and every one of these particulars. The means, by which this is only to be done, is the scripture taken by itself alone, as all you protestants teach: Wherefore an unavoidable necessity does fall upon you. to affirm, That all things necessary to be believed or done, are plainly fet down in scripture: And confequently, what is not to delivered, is thereby fufficiently fignified not to be necessary. As for your limitations, in declaring these words, plainly fet down, we shall (besides what we have already faid) fay much more in the end of this fection and fect. 7. Now we must give a distinct declaration of this your opinion, which, perforce, must be held by all kind of protestants; for necessity forceth them, who difagree so often, here wholly CS

to agree. First then, let us declare those first words of their affertion, All things necessary to be believed or done. These words must of necessity be understood so, that all things are plainly set down in scripture, which are thus necessary: First, to the universal church, as it is a community; Secondly, all things which are necessary to all such states and degrees, as must needs be in so vastly diffused a community; and Thirdly, all things which are thus necessary, to every fingle person, bound to be of this community. As for the first; the church being intended by Christ to be a community, diffused through the whole world, and intended to be continued to the end of the world; such a community as this is, must, by infallible authority, be plainly told many things, wholly necessary for her direction and perpetual preservation, which no one of you can shew to be plainly fet down in fcripture.

3. As first, She must, by infallible authority, be plainly told in what manner she is, in all times and places, to be provided of lawful pastors, and that with perpetual succession. As, whether it be in her power, only to appoint the manner of choosing these pastors? Or, they may be appointed her by meer laymen, having secular authority: And that, whether this secular authority be lawfully obtained, or unlawfully usurped? The knowledge of this is necessary: For we are bid, not to hear those pastors which enter not by the door.

4. Secondly, In like manner, she must be told, what power these pastors have in respect of one another: Whether there be one, or none at all, to have supreme authority over the rest? And who they be? Or whether they be all equal, so that the one cannot be judged, corrected, or deposed by the other, or by the secular magistrate? Or, how many of these pastors must concur to the lawful

lawful judging, correcting, or deposing of these pastors? Pastors have such a main influence into their flocks that, in so vast a community, scarce any thing is more necessary, than due and lawful fubordination among them, legally appointed, legally observed. What plain text of scripture tells her how this is to be done?

5. Thirdly, In like manner, the must be told, what power these pastors have over the laymen, be they emperors, kings, or other magistrates, or common people? What laws any of these pastors, severally taken, can make? And how strictly these laws oblige? How just the censures be, which are imposed for the breach of them? All which things are of apparent necessity for the direction of the church, that every one of these pastors may know what in conscience he can, and ought to do, not to exceed his power, or not to be defective in his

duty.

6. Fourthly, She must in like manner be told that, which so mainly concerns her, in point of universal government, by the highest tribunal upon earth; which tribunal protestants acknowledge to be lawful general councils, and then national councils. For, upon the lawfulness of national councils, and upon their legal power (even in matters of making fo great a change of religion, as wasmade by bringing in protestant religion, in place of the Roman faith, and dividing from the whole world) depends wholly the lawfulness of the English division from the church of Rome, according to the great defenders thereof, Dr. Hammond and Dr. Ferne, who Sect. 9. faith; A national church bath its judgment within itself, for the receiving, and bolding the definitions and practices of the church general: And may bave possibly just cause of diffenting (he means in matters of faith) and reforming; and can do it regularly, according to the way of the church

church by provincial synods. And this is considerable in the English reformation. So he here, and again more fully in his new book. C. I. num. 24. against Dr. Champny. A strange, though a necesfary contradiction, in places so very near of so small a book, to lay for one ground of their faith, That all things necessary must be evidently deduced from scripture; and that, against public authority, evident demonstration of scripture must be brought in points of diffent (as I shewed out of his 13 Sect.) And yet here, to make this authority of a national fynod to be fo very great, without shewing any fingle text of scripture, so much as obscurely intimating any fuch thing: Yea, a doctor could not but evidently know, that in all scripture, there is no where any mention of the authority of national fynods, especially in so mainly important matters for the falvation of a whole nation. Also, a doctor could not but know, that neither the name of fuch a fynod, nor the thing fignified by this name, were fo much as contained in the bible. What then is this but to fpeak just what is for the present turn? Doctor, this authority of national fynods, being made by you, the foundation of your regularly reforming, (though, perhaps, out of policy to oppose these daily born sects) should have been proved by you, by evident demonstration of scripture, to be so great, that it may lawfully stand in opposition to all churches upon the face of the whole earth. Now, as the falvation of a whole nation is so nearly concerned in the true, or usurped authority of a national fynod; or council; fo the falvation of all nations is no lefs concerned in the true, or usurped authority of a general council: And yet first, the scripture neither tells you, who must of necessity be called to this council, to make the calling lawful. Nor fecondly, who must of necessity be assembled, to make the assembly full and lawful. Or how many may fuffice. Nor thirdly, who, or how many of those, who are assembled, must consent to the voting of a decree, or definition before it obligeth. Nor fourtbly, who must call these men. Or, what power he has to force them by censures to appear at the time, and place appointed, and to continue there. Or whether any one be bound to come, except those who please, and when they please. Nor fiftbly, who must preside in this assembly. Nor fixtbly, what power this affembly has to declare all doubts in faith. Or whether it can impose precepts under pain of damnation. For example, commanding all under this penalty to keep Christmas-day, Ascension-day, and to communicate once a year, to fast on Christmas-eve, yea, to fast a whole Lent. Or whether, after all their decrees, every one, without fin, may leave all the command in thefe, or the like matters, quite undone at his pleasure. Here you fee fix things all mainly necessary to be known by the church, as a community; none of which are plainly told her in scripture. These fix points, added to the former three, make nine. Let us then proceed.

7. Tenthly, This community or church must also be plainly told, what public service her pastors may, and ought to perform in the church. Whether they may have none at all, as now the sashion is? Or whether they may have such an one as is different, even in the prime substance, from all the world, as the sashion was heretofore? For, it cannot but be a thing highly importing, in a whole community, to retain such or such a public service as was, at least in substance, appointed by the apostles; and not to make what changes private men or national synods please, nor to discard all public service: Yea, that very service which all christians of all nations (which were not

confessed heretics) every where used; as appears by all their most ancient service-books which you could find in any corner of christendom. The beginning of the substantial things in this liturgy, or public service, can never be found out, by all diligent search used by protestants this last hundred years; tho the time of every little accidental change be extant in many records, which would not have failed to record the beginnings of the substance of the liturgy, had it had any beginning different from that common beginning, of all practises of christian reli-

gion brought in by the apostles.

8 Eleventhly, the church is primely concerned in the use lawful or unlawful of sacraments, and therefore this (as all other things necessary for her) should be plainly taught her in scripture: And yet in all scripture she can neither find the name of sacrament in this fense which we, and our adversaries take it, nor any rule to direct her to know what a facrament is? Or what is required to the lawful administration of true Sacraments? Which our adverfaries hold to be fo necessary to the true church, that in their tenth article, they make it one of their two certain figns and marks, by which the true church may always be known from the false church; and yet (O prepofterous proceedings!) they, who will have all necessary things fet down plainly in fcripture, know very well that many necessary things concerning the true use of sacraments, are no where experssed therein, as no one of those things are which I have now named, nor many other things concerning their true use; for example, by whom is every facrament necessarily to be administred? Whether must the ministers of all sacraments of necessity have any orders, or none at all? And what order must they have, by whom, and in what manner, or in what form must these sacraments be conferred? Or whether are we bound to use these facrafacraments only when we lift, and as often, or as feldom as we lift? For nothing of this point is delivered in scripture, nor of the other things I just now named; whence very many, and very important differences are amongst us; all undecidable by scripture, which is so deeply filent in all these points. Hence some of you, for ordering Priests and deacons, require bishops ordained, and ordaining with fuch a form as never antiquity used; and without these priests, they fay, there is no lawful administring facraments, at least in public: Yea, tho' they hold matrimony no facrament, yet we fee a world make scruple about the lawfulness of it except by ordained ministers, or at least ticket ministers: A thing manifestly not expressed in scripture, to which notwithstanding they all contend nothing to be added. Others therefore far more consequently answer, that what is not plainly set down in fcripture, is thereby fignified not to be necessary; but it is not plainly set down in scripture, that of necessity priests are to be so ordained, or are only to administer facraments, or that they only should have power to bless the bread; for where is this written? For Christ, after he had taken the wine, faid, drink you all; which words import a command to laymen to drink (as you fay) why therefore do not these words, do you this, concern all lay people as well as your priefts, who can shew no better authority why they only should bless the bread and wine? You differ also, whether the bread of necessity must be of wheat or barley, oats or peafe? In baptifm, fome will have such and fuch words to be necessary; others will allow baptism in the name of Christ alone; others will say no words at all are necessary. For (fay they) when our Saviour would have his apostles to ask in bis name, Jo. 16. 23, 24. he is not to be understood, that of necessity they should use any words; so

th

fe

tl

ſi

C

u

e

u

k

e

ti

t

t

t

tl

12

n

0

k

n

tl

al

h

13

CI

ſŧ

V

fc

te

a

te

W

W

te

when he bid them go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, &c. Matt. 28. he is not necessarily and plainly to be so understood, as if he did bid them to use any words at all, for this is not set down in scripture; and what is not plainly set down in scripture is thereby held by you unnecessary. Lo here in this number, how many other things have been set down by me, all so necessary to the church, as a community; and yet not plainly told her by the scripture? But let all these many things go to make up an even dozen. This dozen proves twelve times over what I said of the

church taken as a community.

9. But most of these things also are necessary to be known by some peculiar states of persons, which must of necessity be in this community: For in it there must be lawful pastors, who cannot know themselves to be lawful pastors, nor carry themfelves for fuch, unless they know themselves to be fent by lawful authority; because (according to your doctrine,) the other (and the only other) mark of the true church, is fet down in your tentb article to be the true preaching of the word of God. But bow shall they preach unless they be (lawfully) fent? Rom. 10. 15. They must know also, whether according to Gods ordinance, any other be their fuperiors to judge them, correct them, &c, that fo they may discharge their duty in obeying them. They must know the bounds and limits of their power over some, or all lay-men. They must know what their duty is to fee the decrees of national or general councils observed, when these Councils are lawful; and consequently, they must be furnished with fufficient means to know the lawfulness of them; which they can never be, but by knowing those fix things specified above N. 6. no one of which fix things are clearly told them by any feripture. To these pastors also it belongs to perform

.

1

).

3

t

0

.

r

V

e

e

the public fervice in due manner, and to teach the people when they are bound, to affift at it; and confequently they of necessity must be told which is the public service used by the apostles, and their fuccessors instructed by them to use it. For who can believe they used none at all, tho' what they used be no otherwise written than in the public parctice of, not one but as many nations as they converted; all which used liturgies containing the essence and substance of a true sacrifice. These pastors also must know all that in the last number we faid to belong to the wholly necessary knowledge of true facraments: They must know, for example, whether they may permit women to baptize, in case of necessity; as I shall shew all antiquity to have held and practifed, tho' there be no fuch thing clearly fet down in scripture; and so for other things. And thus much for clergy-men, and their state. Marriage is also a state of millions of lay-men, and to which so many of them, not yet married, do pretend: Now some things under pain of damnation must be practised, and consequently known by these men, which notwithstanding are not plainly told them in scripture; as, whether they may have two wives, or no, at one time? We all hold this damnable, and yet this obligation of having but one (fo hard to many) is no where clearly, and manifestly fet down in any scripture. Secondly, it is damnable to them to marry within fuch and fuch degrees of kindred, as we all hold: Where are these degrees clearly told us in the new scripture? If we are to practise what is in the old testament, men may at once have one or more wives; against which you have no clear text in all the new testament. I might add, that it is necessary to those who marry, to know whether it be lawful to do fo without a priest, there being no such thing intimated in scripture; according to which holy and mysterio us

sterious things are known to have been lawfully performed by the ministry of lay-men. For the killing the pascal lamb was both holy and misterious, and yet done by lay-men. Why may not then marriage be performed without a priest? Add now these two or three to the former dozen, and you have at least fourteen several things, the knowledge of which are all necessary to men of several states in the church; and yet no where set down in plain scripture. I say here nothing of the obligation which parents have, to send their children to be baptized in due time, because of the obligation of baptizing children we shall speak hereaster, Sea. 8. N. 3. as also of sending them to such who can lawfully administer baptism; of which I have said

fomething.

10. Lastly, speaking of all in general, whatsoever they be, many of the things now specified, must, under pain of damnation be known by them, that they may practife their necessary duty which obliges all, and every one to be of a church which has lawful pastors, and which hath lawful priests, ordained, with the matter and form which is necesfary, by true bishops, and not false ones, and the preachers of which church must have true mission. All must know also, how far they are bound to obey these their lawful pastors, both with interior submission of judgment in some cases, and also exterior conformity in others. They all must know themfelves to be of a church where God is publicly ferved, with that public service which the apostles brought into the church, and commended to their fuccesfors. Every one is bound not to work upon the Sundays, as we will shew, tho' neither this, nor yet many other things (of which we shall speak in many of the next fections) be plainly fet down in any scripture. Here we have had above fourteen of these things specified, only for the full declaration

tion of these words, necessary to falvation: All which

you fay are plainly fet down in scripture.

lly

he

ri-

en

w

uo

ge

es

in

on

be

of 8.

.

id

er

ł,

at

15

-

e

1.

-

r

-

S

r

1

r

1

1

II. Let us now declare these words, plainly set down in scripture; that all may plainly see how many more great new difficulties spring from them. The first difficulty (cleared by no plain scripture) is, whether the book of scripture, in which such a point is fet down, be Gods word, or no; as when it is written in the book of Toby, Judith, the Machabees, the Apocalyps? The second difficulty, cleared also by no plain scripture, is, whether, tho' such a book be Gods word, yet I be secured, that it has not been corrupted in the chapter or verle, expreffing the point in controversie. The third difficulty, cleared plainly by no scripture is, that these words, on which the controversie depends, be infallibly taken in this place in their common or usual sense, or perhaps taken figuratively, or spoken mystically of some other thing. For how is it possible, by scripture only, to come to have an infallible knowledge of this, on which the controvefie wholly depends? being this depends meerly on the inward free-will of God, who perhaps would use only the plain vulgar sense of these words in this place, perhaps would use them only figuratively, or only mystically. To know this fecret free-will of God, and that infallibly, I must have such a revelation, or such an affistance of the holy ghost, as you will not allow to the church represented in a council, and therefore it cannot be prudently allowable to any private Man; neither can any private man shew plain scripture for his particular pretence, to know infallibly this fecret will of God. A fourth difficulty (not to be cleared by plain scripture) is, that after I have perruled the whole scripture, purposely to know what I am bound of necflity to believe and do, for my falvation; I find no where plainly told me, that I am only to believe, and do that only which is plainly

ly told me in scripture; so that perhaps I may be bound both to believe, and do somewhat not expressed clearly in scripture, especially it not being clear, plain and manifest by scripture, that I am not to hear the church, nor admit of unwritten traditions, but stand only to what is written. But of these four difficulties, we shall speak fully in the

following fections. have the day of the state of the

plainly set down in scripture, be yet liable to a sisted dissipation of set down in scripture, be yet liable to a sisted dissipation of sites, that men of quite contrary perswasions in faith, say, that such a text says plainly this; another says that it says plainly no such thing; yea, that it says the plain contrary: Witness those words, this is my body; which as you bring it about, must plainly signifie, this is not my body. And thus we contend whether scripture be plain and clear; which makes it plain and clear, that scripture, those submitted to by us both, endeth neither of our differences in most important matters.

13. A fixth difficulty (and a most fruitful mother of a number of difficulties) arifeth from your own explications, and declarations, and modifications, and limitations, and as good as annihilations, by which you fo restrain this principle; which you frain so much at other times, to make it reach home to all points necessary, by a clear dicision of them all, even in any necessary controversie. Dr. Fern, with whose words I began this se ction, tells. us, that all things necessary are not so plainly set down; that every one who reads scrpture, can manifeltly draw out of it the knowledge of all points. that are necessary; but (fays he) it is enough, if it be done by the Ministers. So little plain dealing there is in calling, or miscalling that thing plain; which plainly proves it felf not to be fo, by not being plain to any, who are not as knowing men as their ministers. All women (who so desperately

read.

read and cite the bible) may now despair of knowing, by their own reading, even those very things which are necessary to falvation. This, they now tell you, must be done for you by ministers, from whom if you will have it, you must take it on their word: For you are a reprobate if you tell them their plain deductions be not plain nor conformable to scripture; tho' you may be one of the elect, and yet fay fo much against what whole general councils have deduced from scripture. But this which they would have you believe to be plainly fet down. they tell you cannot be found out to be fo by all kind of ministers, but only by such (point them out with your finger if you can) as use all these things following. 1. Attention. 2. Diligence in fearch of the scripture. 3. Collation of places. 4. Observing the connexions. 5. Sincerity and impartiality. 6. prayer and devotion for affiftance in the work. To all which you must ever put this notandum, that neither you can tell, when they have used these things fufficiently, to come to the plain and wholly necestruth; nor they can tell whether there has not crept in some error in the use of these means, spoiling all Neither will the use of these only suffice: Skill in greek, and deep skill, is required for perusing the new testament, and no less skill in hebrew for the old. To these still fallible rules, so many more are to be added out of your own divines; that your great divine Sanchius (de facra scriptura Col. 409) affigns no fewer than nineteen rules, besides the boving the spirit of God (quite forgot by Dr. Fern) and besides understanding the words and places of scripture. No wonder then that your learned scharpius (in cursu theologico de scriptoribus, controvers. 8. P. 44.) affigns full twenty rules for the understanding of scripture; which, unless they be kept, we cannot but err, as he fays. I wonder how many more eave anings a data emallement of Mary

YELK

rules are necessary for ordinary understanding men, to know that you have not erred in the use of all these twenty rules, especially he and others exacting, among other rules, to know original languages, to discuss the words and Hebraisms. Now, dear reader, as thou lovest thy foul, stand here a little, and ponder how thy ministers abuse thee, which do all of them teach this doctrine (delivered by Dr. Fern, in Sect. 8. 9, 10, 11. and 14. in these words, the place last cited) If you will be with us, you sball see what you do. We require your obedience to what me demonstrate to be Gods will. The church of Rome (because forfooth, she will have you use the better light of counfels illuminated by the holy ghost) faith, if you will come to me, you must put out your eyes. So he, so all the rest do plainly cheat thee, when they tell thee, thou fhalt with thy own eyes fee all things plainly fet down out in scripture: For now when they come to their tryal, they tell thee thou must trust ministers, and not at all, but fuch as can and really do use twenty hard rules. But of this more Sect. 7. N. 3. here I only befeech thee too tell me, how thou canst come to think that he, who for our falvation gave his precious blood, would not give us also some more plain rule to direct us to the infallible belief of that, which he obliges us to believe under pain of damnation. See my preface num. 2. 3. dear Lord! Is this that was promifed for an extraordinary favour (not yet granted) when God himfelf should come and save us, and give us away, so surpassing all former ways. A way fo direct unto us, that Fools cannot err by it: For furely wife, and very wife men know neither greek nor hebrew, nor the means how to know that those, who know these languages, have duly used their knowledge, and the other odd nineteen rules, which unless they are kept, we cannot but err. See also Sect. 7. here protestants with weeping eyes may

w It

of

lie

H

de

 E_{I}

to

he

a

Af

fcr

th

th

m

no

To.

VO

vo

for

lie

may fay, what Juvenal did fing, O quis custodiet ipsos Custodes!

What rules to men short-sighted given shall be,

To know when overfeers over-fee?

Sect. 3.

A seventh argument. By scripture we know not which books are canonical scripture, which not.

Neither is scripture known to be God's word by its own light; wherefore, protestants do not believe scripture with divine faith.

THE force of this argument briefly is this. If scripture were our only rule of belief, it would tell us all things necessarily to be believed: It does not tell us what books be the only true word of God, which is a point most necessary to be believed: It is not therefore our only rule of belief. Here you see a 50th necessary, and most necessary point, not plainly fet down in scripture. Luther denies the Apocalyps, the Epifile to the Hebrews, the Epistle of St. James, and other parts of scripture. to be true scripture; what text tells him plainly he must believe the contrary? We hold some half a score books to be true scripture, which you hold Apocrypba: what scripture, or one single syllable of scripture, tells us we hold false and you true? Cite that text, and we yield. If you cannot cite that text. then yield yourselves to believe many, and so very many parts of scripture to be God's word, which by no one fingle text of scripture, you can prove to be fo. Tell me then, I pray, tell me, as you tender your own and my falvation, upon what ground you believe them to be fo? You believe all things for the faying of true scripture: Why do you believe the scripture to be scripture and God's word?

Not upon any text, for you have not one: And yet you believe this infallibly. What other ground have you, besides texts of scripture, able to support an infallible belief? Is the tradition of the church to be relied upon in fo great a matter? Then much more may it be relied upon in leffer matters. But if she be fallible in the delivery of her traditions, how can I, upon her authority, ground an infallible affent to the belief of all the books of scripture, being God's certain word? For this is a very hard point, because many of them contain things of themselves very incredible, as that the personality of God the father should be all one thing with the divine essence; and that the personality of God the son, should not be all one thing with the personality of God the father; and yet be all one thing with the divine essence, which divine effence is all one thing with the personality of God the father. That the ferpent should speak to Eve; that all the world should be excluded Heaven for one man's eating an apple. Is not that authority, which is able to support the infallible belief of books, which contain things fo hard to believe, able also to support the infallible belief of things far less incredible, as Purgatory, Prayer to faints, an inferior worship of images, in respect of the persons they represent? Have you any text to tell me, that I must believe the church in this most hard and important matter (to wit, in this matter, that fuch and fuch books are infallibly God's word) and that I must not believe her in bester matters? Give me this text, or confess that you voluntarily believe a most huge hard point, on which all your belief in all other points must rely, without any fingle text of fcripture.

2. Dr. Fern, to prevent this argument, puts yet a new limitation to the common affertion of protestants; that all things necessary are plainly set

down in scripture. For faith he, Sect. 13. We fay the scripture contains all the material objects of faith necessary to salvation; that is, All things that bad been necessary for christians to believe and do, though there bad been no scripture. Whence, Sect. 24. he out of this principle, answers my objection thus; That to believe scripture to be the word of God, is not of those material objects of faith which we say are contained in scripture, and are such as had been necessary for christians to believe, though there bad been no scripture. And then he proves the imposfibility that there is, that scripture should sufficiently tell us which books be infallably God's word: and that therefore we must suppose universal tradition still to bring it down to us. But Sir, you mark not how pitifully you undo that very prime doctrine of yours, which forceth you all to maintain, That all things necessary, are plainly set down in scripture; to wit, That (according to you) scripture is given us by God, to be our only direction, in all that we must necessarily believe and do for falvation; for if this doctrine must pass among all for fo very true, that it must be embraced by the belief of all, before they can wifely fay, In this bible only we are to find all necessary truth. It follows then, most undoubtedly, upon God's giving us the bible, to be taken by us as our only rule, that there must needs arise a necesfity of our believing something, which we should not have been bound to believe, if there had been no scripture written. For there must arise a neceflity of believing this very doctrine of yours, that the written word of God is given us for our only direction in the points aforefaid; or else no man is bound to believe this, and to admit of scripture only for his rule. For nothing can be more sure, than that this doctrine has not universal tradition, still to bring it down to us: Therefore,

either this doctrine is most false (as really it is) or most false it is, that we upon the writing of scripture, are only obliged to believe that, to the belief of which, we should only have been obliged, though there had been no fcripture. For what fay you to this argument? True faith is necessary to falvation, therefore, the only rule, guiding us to true faith, must of necessity be known affuredly by us. Because, without the guidance of this rule, we have no affured means (as you fay) to true faith: But the only true books of scripture, are the only rule guiding us to true faith, as you all teach: Therefore, we must have an intallible affurance of these true books. Again, the more impossible it is for scripture to inform us sufficiently which books are scripture, which not, and that infallibly; the more certain it is, that just as this most important point of all points, and the hardest of them all (for it contains all the points that are most hard in our faith) can be made infallibly as fecured unto us without feripture: fo other points also may be, as Purgatory, Prayer to faints, &c. And therefore, these other less hard points may be as infallibly, by the tradition of the same church, as fecured unto us. For, if tradition can support an infallible affent to the hardest points, it can support the like affent to the less hard. He that can carry a hundred pound weight, can carry three or four fcore pound weight.

3. Hence it is that Dr. Fern, in the same place, is forced to fly to that paradoxical opinion, to which nothing but desperation of escaping any other way, has driven him and his protestant brethren. Thus then he says, Scripture being received upon such tradition, it discovers itself to be divine by its own light, or those internal arguments which appear in it to those who are versed in it. Which others express thus: The canonical books

n

a

be

по

W:

de

ful

of

An

cou

are worthy to be believed for themselves; as we affent to the first principles by their own light, so we do affent to scripture to be the word of God, through the help of the Spirit of God, as by its own light. The canonical books bear witness of themselves, they carry their own light, by which we may see them to be God's word; as we see the sun, to be the sun, by its own light; so they.

4. We must then first speak a word of this tradition, which Dr. Fern called universal tradition. that is, the tradition of the whole church, which you all fay is fallible, and so you must not rest upon it with an infallible affent, but take it as a prudent motive, perfuading fuch books, as you hold to be canonical, to be God's word, which you believe to be fo for itself. But Sir, it is most false, that universal tradition has delivered just that number of books, and those books which you hold, to belong to the true canon. The council of Laodicea (in which you used to boast your canon to be contained) omits the Apocalyps or revelations; and besides Ruffinus, you will not find one ancient writer, who either puts not fewer or more books in the canon than you do. Our canon you deny, and discard some half a score books out of it. Yet ours is the only canon which can claim a fufficient tradition, as I shall here shew, Num. II. And as for the council of Laodicea, it is far from being against us, for it defines indeed fuch books to belong to the canon of scripture; but it does not exclude any one of thefe, which also afterward, when due examine was made, were found delivered, if not with as full, yet with a tradition fufficiently full; as you may fee in the third council of Cartbage, to which St. Auflin subscribed in person. An evident proof of this is, that the fixth general council does confirm both this council of Landiren, and that very council of Carthage, which by name defined

all the books, fet down in our canon, to be God's word: See Num. 11. And then tell me, with what face, you can fo much as pretend to univerfal tradition, for admitting your bible a bible, putting among the Apocrypba so many books, flatly against the tradition of the precedent twelve hundred years. If this tradition be a prudent inducement to embrace what it commends, then it induceth us to embrace half a score books more than you put in your canon: If it be not a prudent inducement, it helps you nothing. If you fly to the tradition of the church only of the first four hundred years, remember that the council of Carthage, just after the end of those years, alledged the ancient tradition of their fathers, which they judged sufficient for defining our canon. They, who were so near those first four hundred years, knew far better the more universal tradition of that age, than we can twelve hundred years after it. True it is (nothing being defined as then) private doctors were free to follow what they judged to be truest: And as you find them varying from our canon, some in some books, some in others; so you will find them varying from one another, and varying also from you. For in those first four hundred years, Melitus and Nazianzen excluded the book of Efter, which you add. Origen doubts of the Epistle to the Hebrews, of the fecond of St. Peter, of the first and second of St. John, St. Cyprian and Nazianzen, leave the Apocalyps or Revelations out of their canon. Eusebius doubts of it. Only Ruffinus agrees just with you. Dotb be make alone fufficiently universal tradition from Christ's time to this? Now then, all of you, by refusing the canon commended by the tradition of our church; are left to the fagacity of your own nofes, to hunt out that most important and infallible certain truth of the true canon of scrip-5. Here ture.

can

5. Here we must examine what help you will have by the true books of scripture, which you fay carry their own light with them, by which they may be as clearly feen to be God's word, as the fun by its own light. For, to the truth of this strange paradox, explicated as above, you have brought the whole substance of your faith, which must all fall to the ground, to be trodden upon by the Socinians, if this groundless ground holds not fure: Becaufe you believe all other particular points relying upon scripture only; all the scripture you believe relying on this ground only, that you know by the very reading of such a book, that this book is as evidently God's word, by a certain light which the reading of it (with spirit) produces, as you fee the fun by its light. Indeed, you have brought your religion to as pitiful a case as your greatest enemies could wish it in.

6. First then, this ground (upon which you ground all) is accounted a plain foolish ground, by your own renowned Chillingworth. I fay, your own: for the most learned of both your universities have owned, and highly magnified his book, notwithstanding his scornful language concerning this ground of your whole religion. Chillingworth then (p. 69 n. 49) answering these words of his adversary, That the divinity of a writing cannot be known by itself alone, but by some intrinsical authority: Replies thus; This you need not prove: For no wife man denies it. And Mr. Hooker (efteemed the most learned protestant which ever put pen to paper) writes thus; Of things necessary, the very chiefest is to know what books we are to esteem boly, which point is confessed impossible for the scripture itself to teach. So he, Eccl. Pol. L. 1. S. 14. pag. 86. And Dr. Covel, in his defence, Art. 4. P. 31. It is not the word of God which does or

D-3

can affure us, that we do well to think it the word of God. Yet, that which fuch men as these hold impossible, and a meer chimæra or fancy, which no wife man would bold, you hold to be as evident as the fun being feen by its own light; as evident as the first principles, which are so evident of themfelves that they need no proof, but are clearer than any thing you can bring to prove them. For example, That the whole is greater than any part. It is impossible that any thing should be so, and not be fo, just in the same circumstances, &c. Do you think any rational man will believe that it is thus evident that St. Matthew's gospel (for example) is the true word of God, by the only reading of it to him, who did not before read this verity? Do not all evidently see, that there is no such evidence to be seen? About the truth of first principles no man ever doubted, or could doubt; about St. Matthew's gospel, the Manichians, Marcionists, Cerdonists, &c. did not only doubt, but flatly rejected it. And incomparable more doubt has been made of other parts of scripture, as we have seen, and shall yet further see. Sometimes, indeed, di-vines call scripture the first principle, an undoubted principle, a most known and certain principle; Not that it is fo for any evidence it carries with itself, manifestly shewing it to be so: But the scripture is faid to be fuch a principle among us christians, because all of us now admit scripture, as of unquestionable and infallible truth. Upon this supposition (evidently granted by us all) we all, in arguing with one another, still suppose, and take for an undoubted principle, That the scripture is God's infallible word. But this does only suppose, and not prove this truth, even fo much as to our own consciences, that scripture is the undoubted word of God, which it cannot shew itself infallibly to be, by the only reading of it. 7. Se-

7. Seconly, There be many millions who can most truly and fincerely protest before God, and take it upon their falvation, that they are wholly unable, by the meer reading of the books of fcripture (for example, the Apocalyps, the Fpistle to the Hebrews, &c.) to come to an infallible affurance that they be God's word; to which affurance, even your admirable Luther, and his most learned disciples, never came: For they all reject these, and other books admitted for God's infallible word by you. Now, good Sir, tell me what means has God provided to bring us (who have not these new eyes, requifite to fee the fun-shine you speak of) or to bring your Lutheran brethren, who will be confessed not to want the true spirit (for they had the first fruits of the spirit in the blessed work of your reformation) what means, I fay, has God provided to bring them and us to this infallible affurance, by which we are all obliged, under pain of damnation, to believe the scripture to be God's word?

8. Thirdly, How comes it to pass, that the preachers of the church find that concurrence of God's grace, in delivering the verities contained in the feripture to very Heathens, that millions of them have been thus converted: But no fingle man is reported (as far as I know) to have found fuch concurrence by only reading the written word, as thereby to have been illuminated with the belief. of scripture? How comes this about, if the divinity thereof be to the reader (when he is as well disposed as the hearer) no less evident than the broad fun-shine? Does not this shew that it is true which we teach, that these internal arguments are only discovered after the seripture is accepted for God's word, and not before, as the cause of accepting it for fuch ?

D 4. 9. Fourthly,

9. Fourthly, As the scripture is the only ground, upon which you build your belief of all other things; fo this divine light (discovered to you by reading the scripture) is the only ground, upon which you believe scripture, and consequently all other things which you believe. This ground then is the ground of all true faith, according to your doctrine. If it be so, how is it possible that the greatest doctors that ever God placed in the church, to the edifying the same, upon no one fingle occasion (having so continual occasions) do fo much, as once at least profess themselves to believe fuch or fuch a book to be God's word, because they, by the reading of it (which was their daily and nightly work) did discover such divine rays, or fuch internal arguments appearing in it, to those who were verled in it; as Dr. Fern speaks? Neither do any one of them give so much as once this for a reason, why they doubted, or admitted not fuch and fuch books, about which (before the definition of the church) there were fo frequent controversies, meerly because they could not discover this light, or these internal arguments. Did these men want the spirit of God, even in the foundation of all true belief? Yea. had not these men of all others, the most observing eyes, and the most erradiated understandings. which so many ages have brought forth? This argument falls heavier upon Dr. Fern, and those who like his doctrine, than upon any other. For Sect. 7. Having undertaken to shew, That sectaries cannot make the plea which protestants make; he proves this by this principle, That fectaries do not pretend to confirm what they fay by practice of antiquity, as protestants do, according to Dr. Fern, and Dr. Hen. Hammond. But, O great doctor ! I pray, if you can, shew us but one small scrap of antiquity, for this your fundamental doctrine: For

For furely this most imports in the very groundwork of faith. And (to use your own so often iterated argument) your part being the affirmative, affirming a main difference to be between you and fectaries (arifing from your adhering close to antiquity) you are obliged to do this, at least where it so imports, as it does in the belief of that, upon which you believe all whatfoever you believe. Again, if you be so good at finding out affuredly God's true word, from his false word, meerly by this your sharp eye-fight, you might do notable fervice to those, who now at London, set forth the most famous bible that ever as yet (as they fay). did fee light. For, you could tell them affuredly, which were the true copies of the true originals, which not; whereas, those fhort-fighted doctorsdo openly profess themselves to sweat at this, by indefatigable labour, in conferring every verse with feveral copies, and then culling out that which agrees with the most and best copies. To this industry they profess themselves to trust, and not to that pretended light, though you make it the ground of all your faith. See the next Sea. N. 8.

10. Fifthly, Largue thus, Take the book of Baruch (which you hold not to be God's word) inthe one hand, and the book of Micheas in the other hand; this book has feven chapters: Now I challenge you, if you can, to tell me that chapter or the part of that chapter in any one of these seven chapters, which has more divine rays, or internal arguments for theholiness of it, than appear in the fix. chapters of the book of Baruch Your part is affirmative, affirming that there be fuch internal arguments, and fuch evidences, and that there be more of them in the one than in the other: Shew me but one of them, or else you will shew yourselves to the world to vent your own fancies, for grounds. D 5 of of belief, even in the most important points of belief. So I say again, take the book of Toby, take the book of Judith, which you reject for Apocryphal, as not carrying with them a divine light, and those internal arguments: Take (I say) either of these books, and read it over, and be as well versed in it as you are in the book of Numbers, for example; and fee if it be possible for you, with all the help your brethren can afford you, to point out any one chapter, verse, or word in the book of Numbers, carrying with it more divine rays, or better internal arguments, than appear in either of the books I named. What would you have us do with our eyes, to keep us from feeing how clearly this is impossible unto you? which nevertheless should be most easy, if your opinion were true, or any thing like to true. For these divine rays (fay you) carry an evidence of fo high a degree, that you do not only believe (as we poor tolk do) but you do know these books to be divine: And this you know with a most infallible knowledge, produced by the evidence carried in the clear fun-shine of this light, and these so conspicuous internal arguments, making it no less apparent than the first principles.

word, changing the sense of the Holy Ghost (especially this little word, Not) be left out in any one chapter, either through ignorance, malice or carelessness of those writers (whose copies our printed bibles have followed;) whom will you be able to make believe, that you are so sharp-sighted as to see this small omission, and that by a light sufficing for an infallible belief of it, appearing to you only by the reading that place? And yet this you must do to distinguish the true word of God from the salse. But how far all of you are from doing this, I will now declare: All the days of

queen

queen Elizabeth, your bibles did read in the 105. Pfalm, v. 28. They were not obedient, contrary. directly to the true text; which has, They were not disobedient, or rebelled not against bis words, as now you read it. These, and two hundred more corruptions in the true pfalms, you did fing daily. And who was there who did fee in what places these corruptions were? Yea, the queen, then head of the church, made her clergy fubscribe that all these corruptions were God's own word. See the 5 Sect. Num. 4: Whence appears, that you cannot smell out these corruptions; of which I shall say more in the place cited. They then of your religion believe the scripture upon no ground which is not fallible, and which may not really be false, as this light may be: And therefore it suffices not to a divine faith: And so you. have no infallible belief affuring you, that this book is God's word; whence all that is in that book has no divine authority, of which you are affured. And thus, most pitifully, all of you are destitute of divine faith, in all points you believe; because you believe them all upon the authority of those books, which you, upon no infallible ground, can believe to be divine. See here, how you, who boaft of scripture so much, come, by rejecting the church, not to believe the scripture itself, with any divine faith, but only with such human perfuation as may be falle, because it is fallible, having no infallible ground to stand upon. Hence it is that your famous Chillingworth, haying wit enough to discover; the ungroundedness of this ground, and not having grace enough to fet fute footing upon that firm rock of the true church, in . plain terms comes to defend (P. 327.) it to be tufficient to believe scripture with no other kind of affent, than we believe, that there is such a city

re

no

1

e

pi

to

d

tl

V

tl

b

0

t

I

V

r

a

e

f

1

f

1

1

(

-1

whence the ground of his belief of the scripture (upon whose authority only he believes all other things) being thus confessedly found to be human, and to have nothing of divine faith: He is forced to say (P. 159.) We bave, I believe, as great reason to believe, That there was such a man as Henry the Eighth, King of England, as that Jesus Christ suffered under Pontius Pilate. Is this a book to be owned by the prime doctors of both universities, and to be so universally cried up by our nation? Dear Jesus to what times were we come? No wonder that these times are now come to us.

12. Seventhly, I further shew the manifest falfity of your doctrine, by unanswerable experience, confirming what now I said, num. 9. Luther (a man acknowledged by common consent of english divines, to have had Gods spirit in a very large meafure) did read the epistle of St. James, and he held it to be an epistle of straw, præfat in Nov. Test. and his chief disciple Pomeranus, upon the fourth chapter to the Romans, faith, Out of this place you may discover the error of the epistle of James in which you see a wicked argument. Moreover he rediculously deduceth his argument: He cites (fays this fellow) scripture against scripture. But I go on with Luther, he did read the Apocalyps, and for all the light and internal arguments he could discover in it, he thought it not written with an apostolical spirit. All our english divines read these self fame books, and there is not one of them, nor their disciples, so ill sighted, but they can discover a light no less, clearly shewing these books to be Gods infallible Word, than the sun sheweth itself to be fun by its light; they all fee internal arguments sufficing to an infallible assent of the quite contrary verity. But how can that ground be but falle, which groundeth plain contradictions? If you reply,

reply, that Luthers not seeing such books to be canonical, is only a negative argument of small force. I answer, that where things are affirmed to be as evident as the fun-shine, and as clear as the first principles; and that these things affirmed by you to be so clear, are also daily set before the eyes of a man fo well feeing as Luther and his prime disciples were; and yet, that neither he, nor his prime disciples, should ever be able to see this light (tho' their sharp-sighted eyes so often laboured to discover it) this cannot be but a certain fign, that either these men were pitifully blind, or that you miserably fancy fuch a light to shine in the very reading of the Apocalyps, the epistle to the bebrews, the epistle of St. James, &c. Is it a weak argument to fay, I have been in the hall on fet purpose to see if there were a candle fet up lighted there, and I could fee none, tho' I most carefully endeavoured to fee it, and had my eyes about me; therefore I conclude there is no light fet up there? I conclude also that either I, who fay this, am blind; or you, who fay there is fuch a light, are manifestly deluded by a false fancy of your own. And I can also make my argument as strong in the affirmative, as in the negative. I do it thus. St. Austin (the most sharpfighted man that the church has had) a man confessedly endued with a true spirit; and a man of your own religion, as you will fay, and confequently a man agreeing with you in that doctrine, on which all your whole belief is built; to wit, that true scriptures were infallibly believed to be Gods word, because they were discovered in the very reading of them to be fo, by a divine light, and by internal arguments, sufficing to ground an infallible affent to this verity; this man, I fay, and the whole third council of Cartbage, together with him, did believe that all and every one of those books which we believe to be canonical and divine, to be so indeed, and

ea

m

bo

V

W

co

ar

do

bo

CE

fi

g

th

W

V

25

cl

cl

al

bo

de

da

ne

kı

th

in

gı

m

er

bit

CC

fic

W

ab

TIC

ta

ny

and to be propounded to be so to the people. Behold here, as good eyes as you can pretend to have, reading these books, and believing them infallibly to be divine; which they could not do (according to your doctrine) but by discovering in them a divine light, shewing this truth evidently, and by fuch internal arguments, as fuffice to infallibility. Therefore these books (seen so infallibly to be divine) are indeed fo, and you must grant them to be fo, and not to be Apocryphal, as you hold them; or elfe you must grant that St. Austin and the fathers. of the council of Carthage, and all the Fathers, who ever after this council held this our cannon, did not agree with you in the prime principle of your religion, teaching that there is no infallible ground to believe such and such books to be Gods word, but that divine light appearing in the reading of them to fuch readers as they were. For if they agreed with you in this principle, then they did conceive themselves to discover this divine light in those very books which you call Aporryphal, as well as in the other, which you hold canonical: And if they all were deceived by this principle in those books, then you may be deceived in all the other, because your only ground for their being divine, is hence clearly proved to be fallible and falfe, and most insufficient to ground an insallible belief: But you have no other faith than that which refts wholly on this ground: Therefore all the faith you have is fallible. And if any one object that St. Ferom (as great a doctor in point of the knowledge of the scriptures as St. Austin) did not hold the book of the Machabees for Gods word, which St. Austin held to be Gods word: Therefore one of them relied on a fallible ground; why not St. Austin, as well as St. Ferom? I answer, that even from hence, it is evident that neither of these two (the' the most

eagle-fighted doctors that ever the church had) did make the ground of their receiving or rejecting books for true or false scripture, to be any such divine light, appearing to fuch readers as both they were: For then they could not have held quite contrary one to another; as I said of the Lutherans. and you. The true reason, why these two great doctors were of contrary opinions concerning thefe books as also divers other holy fathers were concerning divers other books (which had been impoffible if the evidence of true scripture, had been so great as you make it) the true reason, I say, was, that as yet the church of Christ had not defined which books were Gods true word, which not: Wherefore, then it was free to doubt of fuch books as were not admitted by fuch a tradition of the church, as was evidently fo universal, that it was clearly sufficient to ground an infallible belief. For all those holy fathers agreed ever in this, that such books were evidently Gods word, which had evidently a sufficient tradition for them: Now in the days of those fathers, who thus varied from one another, it was not by any infallible means made known to all, that those books (about which all their variance was) were recommended for Gods. infallible Word, by a tradition clearly sufficient to ground belief; for the church had not as yet examined and defined, whether tradition did clearly enough shew such and such books to be Gods infallible word. But in the days of St. Auftin, the third council of Cartbage, Anno 397, examined how fufficient or unsufficent the tradition of the church was, which recommended those books for scripture, about which there was fo much doubt and contrariety of opinions. They found all the books contained in our cannon (of which you account fo many Apocrypbal) to have been recommeded by a tradition, sufficient to ground faith upon. For on this ground

CO

W

ci

ga

1

m

na

tie

of

th

th

di

ſh

CO

di

m

T

do

re

OU

an

pe

by

70

Ĭ

ey

G

Ag

ha

yo

tur

lig

ne

of

pri

ground (Can. 47.) they proceeded in defining all the books in our cannon to be Canonical. Becaule, fay they, we have received from our fathers, that these books were to be read in the church. Pope Innocent the first, (who lived Anno 402.) being requested by Exuperius, bishop of Tolouse, to declare unto him which books were canonical, he answers Ep. 3. that having examined what sufficient tradition did demonstrate, Quid cuftodita series temporum demonstraret, in the end of his epistle c. 7. he sets down, Qui libri recipiuntur in canone fanctarum scripturarum. What books are received in the canon of the boly scriptures. To wit, just those which we now have in our canon: And tho' he rejects many other books, yet he rejects not one of these. that after these declarations of the sufficiency of this tradition; no one ever pertinaciofly diffented from it, but such, as protestants themselves do confess to be heretics; until the days of Luther, who presumed to call Apoorypbal, not only those books which you count to be fo, but also divers others, as I shewed here Num. 1. Hence from the time of the council of Carthage, and Innocent the First, all in their daily citations of scripture, until the days of Luther, held those very books to be God's word, which we hold to be, and were defined by them to be held to be fo, upon tradition duly examined: And this within four hundred years after Christ, yet after the time of St. Ferom. Now, after this was done, there comes St. Austin, and fets down all these books for canonical, Lib. de Doctrina Christiana, C. 8. After him, comes Gelasius the pope (who lived Anno 492.) and confirms the fame canon. After him, comes the fixth general council, celebrated Anno 680. which in the fecond canon (according to the Greek copy, tranflated by Gentianus) desiring to establish, what their boly fone-fathers had delivered unto them, confirms

confirms this, and the other council of Cartbage. Go further downwards, and still all doctors and writers, in their daily allegations of scripture, cite these books as scripture. The true canon again is fet forth by the council of Florence, Anno 1438. To which council, the very Grecians, Armenians and facobites subscribed: No man pertinaciously gainfaying this so well established tradition, until Luther. Now, if the true discovery of scripture be to go by the votes of the best and the most eyes; who sees not, but that even by this rule, we shall have above half a fcore books discovered to be God's word, which your own sharp eyes cannot see to be so? especially that second book of Maccabees, in which we so clearly discover Purgatory, c. 12. v. 43, 44, 45 If any man objects, that in the council of Carthage, &c. That one book of the prophet Baruch, is not fet down by name (though never excluded) he must remember that this book of Baruch, is joined in our bible with Feremy, whose fecretary he was, and as his fecretary, he joined his book as an appendix to Feremy: And therefore it is understood by these fathers to be admitted together with all Feremy, excluding no part of him, as you exclude. I end then this fixth reason thus, The best seeing eyes of antiquity, have feen different books to be God's word, from those which you hold to be so: Again, your own first brethren in your reformation have feen those books not to be canonical, which you have seen to be so: Therefore, the true scripture is not infallibly to be known by so evident a light as you speak of, by which contradictories can never be seen.

)

8

1

3

-

r

-

n

15.

M

e

1

-

f-

gt

15.

13. If any man think he can escape the force of any of these arguments, by pretending the private affurance of the spirit, making this dim

th

be

fil

al

W

Ca

01

A

tr

CC

ca

ın

ne

te

ca

ha

of

of

ru

fit

W

to

pla

tui

tho

has

light appear clearly to him, which fo many others (for want of the affiftance of the fpirit) come not to fee; This man will run upon two main inconveniencies. The first is, that he most ungroundedly lays claim for himself, and for all the little flock of his brethren, to have in private this affiftance of the spirit assisting them, even as far as infallibility, to the hardest of all points: And yet, most ungroundedly denies any fuch assistance to the universal church, represented in a general council. He denies also the same spirit unto the greatest doctors of the church, confessed by all to have been the chief lights of the world, for fanctity and knowledge in fcriptures: For all thefe are found flanding directly opposite to them in their canon of scripture, and not one of them can be shewed to agree with them in this prime ground of admitting any book for God's word, upon the light which God gave him by the spirit. The second inconvenience is, that when he is questioned to give an account, how he is affured, that he in particular has this affiftance of the spirit, sufficing to ground an infallible affent; and how he is most affured, that this is not an illusion? He can only answer, that he has tried, as well as he (poor foul) could, whether this spirit were from God or no; and he found it (and that infallibly) to be from God. But Sir, I ask you by what infallible means did you try it? If you fay (as you must needs fay) that you tried it by the word of God: We cannot but pity your pitiful answer; for you forget that before this trial was made, you could not have any afforance that the scripture was God's word; to the belief of which truth, you cannot possibly come, until you have first an infallible affurance, that you in particular have God's spirit. For, tell me, by what other way you can come to this affurance? How can you then fay, that 75

Ot

1

le

ſ-

25

t,

2

e

to

e-

re

ye id

16

e-

d

in

ft

11

d

je.

le

ft

:

m

d

15

u

1-

3

n

at

that you have tried your spirit by that word, which before this trial of your spirit, you could not possibly know to be infallibly God's word. You will all walk in a circle, as the wicked do, and as that wicked spirit, who circles about to see whom he can devour; until you come to stand stedsally upon the rock of the church.

Seat. 4. 10 main and Seat. 1.

An eighth argument. That the scripture cannot decide this controversy, which books he the true uncorrupted copies of the true books of scripture. And therefore protestants believe not scripture with divine faith.

A word of the famous bible now coming forth at London.

A S it is in vain to know for certain, that my A father did (to my great advantage) make a true authentical will and testament, of which I conceive myself to have a true copy; without I can authentically prove the copy that I have to be indeed authentical. So it is to small purpose, that God did by his prophets, write fuch books as Genesis, Exadus, and the rest of the old and new testament, to our inestimable advantage; unless ! can also by undeniable assurance, shew myself to have the true authentical and uncorrupted copies of all these books; uncorrupted, I say, in all parts of them; for if it were not known to be uncorrupted every where, it might be suspected of falfity every where. Now that the copies, which we have of scripture, even in the Hebrew or Greek tongues, be uncorrupted, we are no where told plainly in scripture. The last part of the scripture which was written, was written about a thousand and fix hundred years ago. No scripture has been written since that time, to tell us, that ince

G

W

25

B

ha di

is

W

y

W

by ki

TI

h

y

al

th

b

n

b

tl

PI

al

tr

na B

0

ag

W

be

to

fince that time no corruption has happened, or falfifying the copies written fince that time: No scripture then written did plainly affure us, that the scriptures should never be corrupted by those who printed or writ them. Neither did the apoftles take care to have the copies, written by them, to be authentically figned, fealed, and delivered into the hands of fuch and fuch, as might authentically declare their being true originals, or agreeing in all things exactly with the true originals; which is an evident fign, that God intended not the scriptures for our judge, and only direction in all points: For all law-makers use this diligence, to fecure their laws from corruption. Behold then, here is now a fixteenth point, primely necessary to falvation, and yet no where fet down in fcripture: I say, primely necessary: For, if it be necessary to have faith, it is necessary to have the only rule directing and guiding to true faith, no where made crooked and directed false, as a false corrupted copy would do. Here then, you must fly to the tradition of the church; yea, and to the tradition of the present church also: For, the church of other ages, could not affure us that the scripture should be uncorrupted in our age. Is it not as great a contradiction as can be, to fay, we know by the tradition of the present church, that, that very fcripture is uncorrupted, which very scripture bids us not to believe the tradition of the church: Which if I do not believe, I cannot believe the scripture to be uncorrupted, and that infallibly, if her tradition (upon which only I believe this) be fallible? The traditions then of the present church be as infallibly true as your faith; which I prove by this demonstration: Your faith cannot be more infallibly true, than it is true that the copies of the scripture be uncorrupted; for your faith is built upon the word of God,

God, as delivered to you by these copies: Just as we say, our faith is built upon the word of God, as propounded or delivered to us by the church: But it is not infallibly true, that the copies we have now be uncorrupted, because that very tradition of the present church, which tells us this, is held by you to be fallible and subject to lie; and which in a multitude of her other traditions, has lied unto us, according to your doctrine. you fee again, that you believe nothing at all with divine faith: For, all you believe, you believe upon the word of God, as delivered to you by fuch copies as you only, by an human faith, know to be the true deliverers of God's uncorrupted word: This ground is fallible, being meerly human; therefore, the ground which supports all you believe, is human and not divine: Therefore all your faith is human, and not divine; and this holds true in all and every point which you believe.

2. I will now further shew you, how you cannot know by scripture only, that the copies of it be uncorrupt, in those very languages in which the scripture was written: And yet this point is primely necessary to salvation, as I now proved: And, indeed, if the originals cannot be known affuredly to be uncorruptedly copied out, all the translations of these originals may also be false: Now, the more they agree with corrupted originals, the more we are fure they are corrupted. But of translations I will speak in the next section: Here I will speak of the copies, which are faid to be copied out of the true original copies, agreeing word for word with those very copies, which St. Paul, St. Matthew, Mofes, &c. did write: These copies we know by no scripture to be uncorrupt. Yea, if you will hold the church to be fallible; I will bring you feveral convincing proofs, that there can be no certainty, that these copies agree with the true copies written by the true scripture-writers. These scripture-writers did write, either in such Hebrew as was used in the age in which they did write (as did the writers of the old testament;) or they did write in Greek; as did most of the writers of the new testament. Let us see first, how disagreeing the Hebrew copies may be from the original copy of the true writer thereof: Then we will see the same of the Greek

b

d

b

n

tl

th

en th

L

of

an

ne

2172

wl Ca

cle

In

W2

copies.

3. First, Divers of the very originals themfelves were written by fuch men as we know not at all, and so we cannot know them certainly to have been true prophets, but by tradition; which, if it may be false, it may also be false, that they were true prophets, having God's true spirit, affuring them infallibly in all that they did write: And so, though we did infallibly know, that we had a most uncorrupted copy of what they did write, yet we should not be able to know that it were God's infallible word: For, how could we know, that he, who writ this book, was a true prophet; no body (as far as any body knows) telling us one word of that man, good or bad? For these books were written by God knows whom. We have nothing but uncertain opinions concerning the writers of diverse of the most assured an protocanonical books of scripture; as of the books of Joshua, Ruth, Judges, Ester, the books of Kings, the books of Chronicles, or Paralypomenon. So also, it is not certain, whether Solomon himself did write his books of Proverbs; or some that were about him did feverally in scattered papers; one note what he heard at one time, another, what he heard him fay at another time: And then, in the days of Ezechias, some certain men (God knows who they were) belonging to Ezecbias, did make that collection

lection of them which we now have; as the most learned Lyranus holds, writing on that book, and grounding himself on these words, Cap. 25. These are also proverbs of Solomon which the men of Ezechias copied out. Wherefore, not upon the authority of any scripture; but meerly upon the authority of tradition, we know those true original copies to have been penned by true prophets: tho

we know not who they were.

4. But that which I press most, is; that, though we had all the infallible knowledge that could be, that fuch prophets and Mofes had writ with their own hands, fuch and fuch books: Yet, it is impossible (if the present church's authority be fallible) to know infallibly, whether the copies we have now in our days, agree in all places exactly with the original. Yea, we are fure they do not agree with it; which I prove thus: No books of scripture were so solemnly, publicly, and most authentically delivered to be kept, just as they were written, as the books of Mofes, witness the scripture, Exodus 24. v. 4. and Deut. 31. v. 24. And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of the law in a book, until they were finished; that Moses commanded the Levites, which bear the ark of the covenant of our Lord, faying, take this book of the law. and put it in the side of the ark of the cover nant of the Lord, that it may be there for a witness, &c. But these very books, thus written. until they were finished, have manifestly received the addition of the last chapter of Duteronomy, which was written after the death of Mofes; as Calvin himfelt confesseth. So Gen. 26. v. 31. is clearly added by fomebody, who lived in the times in which the children of Ifrael had kings, which was long after the days of Mofes: How then could be fay, And these are the kings which reigned

in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel? Who could fet down these kings, as having reigned until the days of the kings of Israel, but somebody who lived after their reign? Bonfrerius, in his preface to the Pentateuch, adds two other places, changed fince Mofes writ them. That the like changes have happened to the book of Josbua, to the fourth of Kings, and to Feremy, is witnessed by Torniellus, Anno Mundi 3612. But let no man think, that I recount these changes as corruptions; for we all believe those additions to have been made to the true copies of Moses, and those other writers by men specially inspired by God to make them: Yet we, standing only to the human authority of history, cannot tell by whom those changes were made; no history telling us, that the authors of these changes were prophets, or impostors. Only we have the tradition of the present church, asfuring us infallibly, (which the should not, if she were fallible) that the scriptures, we now at prefent have, are infallibly God's word; and confequently, what changes foever have been made in them, were made by fufficient authority from God. You, who reject this authority of the church, can have no affurance that many other changes were not made, as well as these: And fuch changes as may be most foul corruptions, for any thing you know. Again,

5. If we speak of such changes as may be both corruptions, and most pernicious corruptions, in the hebrew bible; you (who reject the testimony of the church as a fallible witness,) cannot possibly make it appear, that the hebrew copies be not grossly corrupted since the times of the apostles: For many and great changes might, after their times, be made by the Jewish Rabbins (men most persidious and malicious,) when they did add points

C

U

e

tl

2

h

w

V

ec

th

ni

in

ev fe

yo

n

r

-

٢,

t

e

y

f

e

e

1

r

r

r

S

O

to the text under pretence of preventing such mistakes, as might easily happen to the less skilful in reading the hebrew text; which to that day had no points to express the vowels: For in the original it was written only with confonants, and the vowels were left to be added by the well instructed reader; for whose help (in reading the scriptures right,) the Jewish Rabbins did first begin to add certain points, fo to tell us where an A, or an E, or any other vowel was to be added according to the true manner of reading that place. Now only God knows whether these, so malicious and perfidious jews, taught us to read every vowel as it should be read in fuch a place; and did not, by the adding of what vowels they pleased, change the sense of the word, to fignifie what they pleased. The putting of the vowels right or wrong depended, not only upon the affuredness of their skill, which for any thing we know) might in some places be deficient and we not knowing these places, are sure of no places; but also the putting of these vowels depended primely on their fincere, and upright honest dealing; which we cannot, in true prudence, much expect from such sworn enemies to christianity, as those jews were. Such men then as these putting all and every one of the vowels to every word of the hebrew text, a good while after the apostles time; what human evidence have we, sufficeing to a certain affurance, of the adding the right vowel to every fyllable of the whole hebrew bible? If wrong vowels be added, the fense will be incredibly wronged: The vowel is the very foul of the fyllable, either making, or marring the true found and fignification, and altering it to most different senses; infomuch that, not only in every word, but even in every fyllable, alteration may be made of the true sense. So in the Latin word monere to admonish, if you change the rowels at your pleasure (as those jewi/b

jewish rabbins might often do, for any thing we know) you may read moneri, to be admonished; manere, to stay; manare, to flow from; minari, to threaten; munire, to fence; muniri, to be well fenced; munera, gifts; minora, less things: And thus the vowels change and alter the right word in several parts. The hebrew language is most fubiect to this inconvenience of any other, because it consists exceeding much of words of one syllable; in which the change of the vowel, makes the fense a perfect changeling. So in english, suppose the scripture should speak against the abuses in balls: There comes a protestant, and he will say, it is against the abuses of popish bulls; There comes a puritan, and he will fay it is against the abuse of bells, using them in such manners as have no authority in scripture; some upstart fectary will fay it is against bills, and other arms, which christian mildness does not allow of. See here how the change of one vowel in one fyllable only, quite alters the fense. This change of one vowel makes a fat man, to be a fit man: And fatness in all places, to be fitness in all places: It makes that which is better, to be bitter: It makes a pot full of butter to be a Pit full of batter. Though you magnifie fo much the present hebrew Copy, as we have it now pricked and pointed, to point us out the true vowels; yet your own english bibles, in several places, testify their corruption, by forfaking their translation to follow ours: I will give you but one example; we (and you with us) read, They have fierced my bands and my feet, Pfal. 22. v. 16 So clear a prophesie for our Saviours crucifixion, is quite turned to another fense in the present hebrew copies, where these malicious jews make us read, as a lion my bands and feet. Thus you see how very little is the affurance, which those, who know hebrew, have, even of their very reading it right as it should be, accord-

command-

according to the true meaning of the scripturewriter: Of David for example, of whose true meaning, these false pointers have disappointed us. We then now have no affurance, to know what vowels should have been put. And if any man now in these days, does pretend to be fure that he has fo much skill, as to tell, by the confonants only, what vowels should for certain be put, according to the meaning of Moses, of David, or of any other Writer; I would only defire this cunning man, to give me a tryal of his skill, by telling me what vowel I mean to have put to these three consonants, bll; whether I mean to signifie a ball, a bell, a bill, or a bull. You will sooner tell me whether the pins I hold now in my left hand be even or odd. Here you will be fure to hit right at twice; for furely they be one of the two: But you may guess twice two times, before you assuredly prophesie, whether I mean by those three consonants to fignifie a ball, a bell, a bill, or a bull.

6. Now for the greek copies; though the copy of the septuagint be not original, yet questionless, if we were fure that we had the true original of that traflation, it would be a strong ground, for as much as concerns those books which those 70 interpreters traslated, who lived 300 years before the new testament was written: But you yourselves exceeding often refuse, in your english bibles, to follow the prefent copies of the feptuagint, as copies that are by you esteemed corrupted in several places; and confequently secure in no place. I shew this in feveral points of great consequence. So Pfal. 118. v. 12. I have inclined my beart to perform thy Justifications for a reward: St. Augustin upon this place, says; for which reward, be says be did incline his beart to perform the Justifications of God: Hence proving, as you fee, that David did make profession to do good works, and to keep God's

[-

e,

commandments for the reward he hoped to get thereby. So the scripture says of Moses, that be bad respect to the recompence of the reward; and out of this respect did that most noble act of prefering the ignominy of Christ, before the being great in the Egyptian court: Heb. 11. v. 26. You to avoid this argument drawn from the clear text of the feptuagint, flie from their translation, to the hebrew copy of a doubtful fense, the one agreeing with the feptuagint, the other agreeing to your turn of shifting of our and St. Austin's sense; by reading as you read, I have inclined my heart to perform thy Ratutes alway even unto the end. So in the fourth chapter of Daniel, v. 27. Daniel fays to Nebuchadonexer, redeem thy fins with alms: Which words are most litterally translated out of the copies of the septuagint: But because they make so manifestly for popisto satisfaction, by which they hope to redeem their fins, (Christ's passion digniffing their good works;) you refuse again to fland to the septuagint, and flie again to the present hebrew copy, which having both the fense of the Septuagint, and another sense helping you to shift off this place, you follow that sense and read, break off your fins by righteausness. Hence it appears, that you yourselves will not allow the true fense of the original greek copies of the septuagint. And indeed St. Ferom find's frequent fault with the copies he had in his days of their translation; (which translation he reverenceth:) See him in Qualt. Hebr. de optimo genere interpretandi, epift. ad Juniam & Fritillam: And he often complains of the corruption of his greek copies in his commentaries upon the prophets. Now in our days Bellarminalib. 2. de verbo dei, c. 6. holds that the copies of this most famous translation are so corrupted, that shev feem to make a new, and quite different translation: as he proves by many arguments, of which one

one is this: Genesis 26. Where the servants of Isaac do say, according to the septuagint, we have not found water: Whereas they should say, we have found water; as is proved by the hebrew, and by Isaac his own words, calling the name of that place abundance, for the plenty of water sound therein.

7. I come now to the new Testament, which almost all of it (except St. Mathew's gospel) was by the aposttes themselves writen in greek. The chief points of our faith depend upon the new testament. If the copies in this language agree not exactly, and in all places, (for falfity in one place proves poffibility of falfity in other places) with the first copies written by the apostles; our Judge (for whose sole authority you plead) will be convinced of corruption, and therefore no infallible Judge. Your great Doctor Beza upon Alls 7, 16. does muster up 2 whole catalogue of corruptions in the greek copies. The same Beza judgeth Erasmus the best of all latter translators: And yet, Erasmus, speaking of the fixth of St. Matt. condemns the greek of trifling and rash additions. If you will be judged by the greek copies, then you must confess, that Christ in the facrament did give us his true blood; for all the greek copies of St. Luke, cap. 22. v. 20. read thus, This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which (cup) is shed for you. So that the cup, that is, the thing contained in the cup, was that very thing which was fred for us; but not wine, but Christs true blood was fhed for us: Therefore not wine, but Christs true blood was the thing contained in the cup. It is a memorable thing which is lately related by Mr. Creffy Exomol. Ca. 8. Nu. 3. in these words, "In my hearing, bishop Ufher professed, that whereas he had of many Years " before a defire to publish the New Testament in " greek, with various lections and annotations; E 3

" and for that purpose had used great diligence, " and fpent much money to furnish himself with " manuscripts: Yet in conclusion he was forced to " defist utterly, lest, if he should ingeniously have " noted all the several differences of reading which " himself had collected, the incredible multitude " of them almost in every verse, should " have made men Atheistical, than satisfy them in " the true reading of any particular passage; an evi-" dent fign that Governors of the church did not " rely only upon what was in writing." So he. And though he has now twice printed this, and though others have also divulged the same in print; yet Bp. Usber seeing this done before his eyes, does not disclaim from it; therefore I cannot but believe the story to be true: And if it be true, how wonderfully corrupted is your only judge? Now, if Bp. Usher alone, in this remote corner of the world, being a private man, could procure fo many old copies in writing; what might have been done by fome great prince, using all industry to get (by means of other great princes, and all other diligences,) all the old copies they could? For, as the multitude of copies, procured by Bp. Usber, did encrease the variety of different readings; so a far greater multitude of copies, would in all probability, have yet much more increased this variety and difference. And the same variety, for the same cause, might yet have been found to be far greater, if five or fix great princes living in five or fix kingdoms (at the greatest distance from one another,) should have all conspired to gather together all the ancientest copies that were any where to be had. Wherefore, if in those only copies, procured by Bishop Ulber, the multitude of several readings were incredible almost in every verse: How much more incredible would the multitude of feveral readings be, if the

the diligence, I spoke of, should be used to procure a greater multitude of written copies? I ask now, when, in these latter days printing was invented, how those, who caused the Greek translation (which we have) to be printed; how (I fay) could they know for certain, that, that one reading (which they thought good to follow in their printed copies) was the true reading? Or how could any man tell which written copy of Bp. U/ber's was the true written copy? I pray let us fo much as know our judge, before we be obliged to accept of him in all matters. Yea, you make us know he is corrupted in many matters; and others may make us know that he is corrupted in many more. And fure I am that corrupted judges are not competent judges: Crooked rules are not good directors. The rule that is given to us all by God, to direct us all, must be a rule easily appliable by all: For this reason, you say, all must read the scriptures, and your meaning is (and must be) that they must read the true seripture; that is, some true copy of the true books of scripture: By what means shall they be assured, that they read the true copy, there being such an incredible difference between copies which are fet forth for true? Not one among an hundred thousand can have this affurance; either for want of means to get the reading of these manuscripts, or for want of skill to read them, and understand them, so as to be able to inform himself of their perfect agreeing in points necessary; especially, seeing that you so little agree in teaching us, which points be necessary and fundamental, that you could never yet be able to give us the number of them; much less, to tell us, which they were, or in what books, or chapters of the bible they were to be found. Wherefore he, who will upon his own knowledge, and not upon some other man's credit dit (far inferior to a general council,) inform himself of the truth of his copy (sufficiently to have a sull assurance, that it is the true undoubted copy of the true undoubted word of God;) he (I say) who will so much as hope to do this, is not one among an hundred thousand. How then can this be that rule given by God, to be applied by every man, to judge by it for himself; by which one, among one hundred thousand, cannot be able to judge for himself, whether this undoubtedly be that rule given him by God. Excellently Seneca, Omnia delibera cum amico, sed prius delibera de amico.

ale

W

11

V

W

W

tl

la

VI

ccat

W

al

re

m

CC

OF

M

be

W

th

ju

All consultations with they fure friend make;
But first confult whom for this friend to take.

Before thou consultest the whole business of thine eternity with this copy, first consult how sure thou art of the sureness of this thy copy. If every man (as protestants will have it) be to be judge for himself in points which so nearly concern himself, then doubtless, in the very first place, he is to judge for himself of this point above all points, which concerns him as much as that, upon which all other points of highest concernment do wholly

depend.

Thus you see, how, not one man among one hundred thousand escapes being gulled by you, whilst you all make him believe, that if he will follow you, he shall see with his own eyes, what he does, and he shall judge for himself; and not take his religion upon trust, as you make them believe we do, because we trust general councils. O dearest brethren in Christ! for his, and for your own sakes, set your eyes at least half open, and you shall presently see, whether we, or you be those who take up our faith on trust. Do we do this, because we believe and trust general councils? These councils, even in human knowledge and

and fincerity of judgment, far excel any private man, trufted by you in this capital point: And, belides human knowledge, they have the infallible: affiftance of the holy ghost promised to them; at: least as much, if not more than to those men. whom you truft. Or rather, do not you take: your faith on trult; for who of you is able to judge for himself, which is the true undoubted copy of the true word of God, by which only you must rule your faith in all points? And who therefore is there among you, who feeing himfelf. wholly unable to judge for himfelf in this point fon which all others wholly depend) is not forced to rely upon incomparable weaker authority than is the authority of a general council, to which the prime prelates of this world are called, bringing with them the ablest divines they can get, each one in the province, from which he comes: And all of the council delivering not so much their opinion (equalat least to yours) but delivering what has been by: them received universally from their ancestors, without note of novelty. Whereas you, when, all comes to all, must in this very point of points. rely wholly on the authority of those few learned! men, who have thought good to fet forth this. copy, which you take upon their word, to agree: faithfully in all places with the true undoubted! original. And this also must be done by you Mr .. Minister, and by you Mr. Doctor, without you be, perhaps, a man more learned, than that one, who cannot be picked out among an hundred: thousand. Now, if this be the case of mer, though fo very learned; what more clear, than: that the less learned (which make up the multitude of fouls redeemed by Christ, cannot possibly; judge for themselves in this point of points; but must trust others to judge for them, and rely wholly upon their judgment? What think your now ?

now? Is this as fafe as relying on the church universal, represented in a general council? Now if this council may be more prudently rely'd upon in this point of high concernment: Why may it not be relied upon, and judged for us in points of less concernment? Shall I wisely trust a man with a thousand pounds, and be unwise, if I trust him with an hundred pounds? Shall it be most prudently done, to let general councils judge for me, which books I am to hold for the copies of God's word, and shall it be imprudence to let a general council judge for me, whether I am to pray to faints or no? To pray for the dead or no? To hold Christ most really present in the sacrament or no? What scripture, or any thing like scripture, have you, to tell me, that the church, reprefented in a council, shall not deceive me in this point (most important of all points:) but that it may deceive me in other things, in which it is more easy to judge right? The church is a judge, (as I shall shew hereafter) to which the multitude of people may have free access; and hear plainly, clearly, and most undoubtedly, what is delivered for true, by the fentence of this most grave judge: And fuch a judge it befeemed the divine providence to give the people, if he feriously defired to bring them, by belief of the only true faith, to falvation. Whereas it is not possible, for one among one hundred thousand, to hear plainly, clearly, and most undoubtedly, the fentence delivered by any book of scripture, concerning the true copy of the true scripture; though all my faith must depend upon this, as you say: Neither can you find any other way to make me secure of this choice of a true copy, comparable to the authority of a general council.

8. To shew this more plainly, I will most faithfully relate unto you, that which you may soon see

with

n

f

n

al

0

0

10

is

it

is

e,

le

ed

i-

to

0

1-

r-

d

)-

ın

is

y

1-

your own eyes, if you please. Your prime masters of antiquity, your chief doctors in all those languages, in which scripture anciently was written, have begun to fet forth the most compleat bible that ever yet appeared (as they fay) for the number of the ancient languages, in which it is setting forth, and for the exquisit exactness of the copies, of which I fpeak, Sect. 3. N. 9. The first five books are already printed, and to be feen in many persons hands. The same men have also (in order to their bible) fet forth an introduction, printed at London by Tho. Roycroft, Anno 1655. In the preface to this introduction, they profess, they cannot produce any one copy, which they can affure us to agree in all things with the true original hand-writing of the authors; Wherefore (fay they) in the variety of copies, what better means can so much as be invented, to pick out the true reading, than the conferring of the most choice and most ancient copies; and then to stand to that reading, which agrees best with the greater part of the most ancient, and most choice copies? This course St. Jerom, &c. This St. Austin took, &c. Sa they. The chief thing they pretend to excel others in, is, Exemplarium optimorum delectu, In the shoiceness of the very best copies. Well now (dear reader) can human industry, such as this is (that is, as great as is to be expected in this world by thee) take more pains, or do more, to procure for thee the truest copies, which can be had for love or money? And, standing in human industry, millions of millions have wanted this means of discovering the true copy, which these learned men have. But what does all this avail another man? For your religion will have every one in point of faith to judge for himself: So Dr. Fern, S. 8. thinks, that because the Roman church will have us to trust to her judgment, pronounced by and with the

the confent of a general council; the will have us to thrust out our right-eye, the eye of our spiritual understanding, &c. "Wherefore, (says he) we cannot yield, but must say, that no man can believe any thing truly, unless he be con-" vinced of it in his judgment according to that, Rom. 14. v. 5. Let every one be fully persuaded in bis own mind; Concluding, by the due use " (note these words) of his reason, that it is "God's holy will that they should so do and be-"fieve." And by and by he tells you, why he faid, that he must conclude (all that he is to be-lieve) " by the due use of his reason. For not-" withstanding the public judgment of the church in a full council, (add, notwithstanding also the private judgment of fuch great doctors as these are, who now to painfully labour in procuring the true copy of the bible for us) " Private christians " (fays Dr. Fern) have their private judgments of discretion for themselves only, which is the discerning, and receiving to themselves only, as " the will of God, what is delivered and propounded to them. For they must answer also for themselves, and live by their own faith; which cannot be without allowing them due " use of their reason and judgment, to see the evidence of that to which they much affent." This is that which Dr. Fern, and other protestant doctors are pleased to call, The due use of reason. Behold here (you most learned doctors, who so unweariedly sweat in setting forth this your admirable bible) behold a doctrine taught every where by your own divines, and most necessary to maintain your standing out to submit your inward judgment to the definitions of councils: A docfrine, making all your labour of very little or no use at all, to your protestant brethren: For some feven or eight years hence, when your bible shall be quite ended, (for until the quite finishing of it, we cannot have the benefit of it as a judge,) then your own brethren must not trust your judgment, judging for them in the choice of the true copy, picked now out of one of your old copies, now out of another; now trusting to this old copy most in this verse, and by and by not trusting it most in the next, or almost the next verse. The due use of reason (say they) permits us not to stand blindly to the public judgment, even of whole general councils, when they define matters of less moment, than is the taking upon your word, our judge in all points necessary to be believed or practised. For though in the second council of Nice. Anno 787, no fewer than three hundred and fifty fathers, did allow of the worship of reliques and holy images of Christ and his faints, Acts 3: Yet we have the private judgment of discretion to judge for ourselves, because we are to answer for ourselves; and we (duly using our reason) judge worship of images to be either idolatry or superstition. Now, if you allow us, by your own doctrine, not to trust a whole general council of three hundred and fifty ancient fathers; you have not the due use of reason yourselves, if you think we may lawfully blind ourselves so far as to let you judge for us in a far more important point; that is, in the taking the only rule of our whole faith upon your judgment. I must, in this point, have your leave not to accept of any one of your copies, as sufficiently true, to be my rule in my whole faith, without I also can see the evidence of what I must assent unto: For so you reach me. See what I said in the very end of the second section. But I go on and confess that I see it is evident enough, that you do indeed fay, that you give me the best copies that can be got; and that.

that, which is more, I fee it is evident that you do indeed fay, all your copies agree in things, which are necessary to salvation: But I do not. nor cannot fee (though one among one hundred thousand be not so learned as I) that all you say to me is evidently true, until I have conferred all the copies as well as you; and until I be as fully certified of the antiquity, and choice exactness of all your copies, as well as you: And this is impossible for me, until I can understand all those languages as well as you; and peruse all the authentical testimonies, which you have of this antiquity, and perfect exactness of your copies. Besides all this, how can I trust you to judge in all and every point, whether the agreement of all the copies be exact in all and every point, fundamental and necessary to falvation; For I know, we ourselves cannot agree which be all the points fundamental and necessary; and my judgment may in this vally differ from yours, as much and as lawfully as it differs from the council I now spoke of. Thus much your own brethren must be allowed to fay.

9. As for our parts, we, to say nothing of what you mention concerning Beza, Munsterus and Erasmus, &c. (from whom, as from professed enemies, we cannot without just suspicion receive any thing.) We, I say, besides this, do not only suspect, but also evidently know, that you mainly disagree from us in understanding the sense of your own words, "when you say There is (in all the copies you have by you) great agreement in all things belonging to faith, and necessary to salvation, &c." And more towards the end, you say, "That they agree in fundamentals." Bishop Usher (whose copies you profess to use so much) if he had gone on with his work I spoke of, n. 7. had given us better satisfaction in this par-

particular, in that we had feen how great, and where the disagreements be. But you make us rely wholly on your authority in this point; I know you could not do otherwise. But as for your judgment in fundamentals, we know not how to rely on you; You tell us our religion and yours agree in fundamentals: If your copies agree in fundamentals no more than our two religions, this agreement will be little to our fatisfaction, nor much to the fatisfaction of many of your brethren: For being, they know you account all the points, in which we and you difagree, not to be points fundamental or necessary to salvation: They, by your granting frequent disagreeing in your copies in points not fundamental, are not freed from, but confirmed in the suspicion which many have, That the copies of the bible agree no better than Papists and Protestants; and that (for any thing they can yet judge by their own judgment of discretion) these your copies disagree about the texts concerning real prefence; the pope's supremacy; Image-worship; Prayer to faints, and for the dead; yea, about our justification itself; the number, the right use, the fruit, the necessity of facraments; and such points as these are; which, though you account them not to be fundamental, yet you account them of fo great concernment, that the difference in these points, gave you most just cause of separating and dividing from the Roman church, with all those scandals and public evils ensuing upon this division. Will not then, this be a sufficient reason of not embracing the copies prefented unto them in this most accurate bible, they having no better assur-ance, that these copies agree with those other copies concealed from them, in these points, (in which their greatest difference from the Roman church

church does confift) than the authority of thefe learned men, who most plainly confess the frequent differences of their copies in points not fundamental, and who also, by the name of points not fundamental, are known most commonly to mean fuch kind of points, as contain no meaner differences than those which are between Papists and Protestants; and which caused this great divi-

Sea. N. 5.

10. To end then this matter, you fee (gentlereaders) That you have not among you any copy, which you undoubtedly know, so much as by evidence of human knowledge, to be God's undoubted word: Will you, who contend fo eagerly to have nothing believed, for which there is not clear scripture, have us, in the most important point of belief, believe that for which we have neither scripture, nor evidence of humanreason? If you say the divine providence would doubtless keep the copies of the originals uncorrupted, because otherwise we should have no fure rule of faith: I answer, that this is to suppose: the very thing which is in question; Whether Christ gave us scripture for our only rule. Yea, because it is clear, that standing in human evidence, no copy can be freed of the guilt of corruption: Therefore, God would have no copy at all to be our only rule of faith, but has provided for our direction another way.

Wall not their the be a difficient realish is not

embrebieft the cortes preligited and rheet is the and bidmate bulley they having so become affile-

a their groups difficate from the found

- into alter to a obega toings.

Horida

2582 Cartealle Pign them, in their peints, the

t

Ó

0

la

01

cl

kr

pa

WC

fay

Sect. 5.

A ninth argument, That the scripture cannot decide this controversy, which translations of the word of God be true: And therefore ordinary protessants cannot believe scripture with divine faith.

1. THE divine goodness defiring passionately (as appears by his passion for all) the salvation of all, and intending to make faith a necessary means to this their falvation, must confequently provide some means to guide and direct us to the truth of this faith; which must be a means fo eafy to be applied by all, that all, by the use of this means, may (if they will) attain true faith, which is but one; for faith, unless it be one, is not faith, as St. Leo fays, Ser. de Natio. Hence it appears, to the very eye, that if the scripture cannot to be used by all (or the far greater part) as to guide themselves by it, in all points necessary to falvation; it cannot be the only means given them for their guide in points necessary to falvation: But it cannot do this to the far greater part of the world, as I prove; for the far greater part of the world cannot make use of scripture in those languages, in which it was written, as has been shewed in the last section, even concerning men, who are more learned, than any one among one hundred thousand; and it is in itself clear enough concerning those, who know not Greek and Hebrew in any perfect degree of knowledge, in which languages the scripture was written; whence it follows, That the far greater part of the world, cannot know what the true word of God (their only judge and director) did fay, but by the means of a translator or interpreter

preter. Now judge you, in what uncertainty that man should be left, who would have a very good guide locked up in some place, to which he himself could never have access, but must hear all the directions given him by some other man who is exceedingly subject to mistake very many things which that good guide should say to him; especially this messenger being often to trust others of no undoubted credit: In this case, your own doctrine does put you (O dear people) who make God's word your only guide, in a way full of a world of doubtful turnings, in which to miss is everlaftingly to perish. This word is locked up fo in Hebrew and Greek closets, that you cannot know what it fays, but by the use of a translator, as by a messenger; who being a man, and having a weak understanding, and a will subject not to take all the pains required for the exact knowledge of all that, which the word of God speaks, in so great a book as the bible is, in which there be very hard expressions in languages nothing easy to be understood, in all words and phrases; especially, feeing that the Hebrew tongue, was quite loft (for as much as concerns the vulgar use) in the captivity of Babylon, some six hundred years before Christ. How hard then must it be now to know the full force, which common use gave these words two or three and twenty hundred years ago? What skill can be known to be here secure? Befides the difficulty of the points of which I have spoken; I say nothing of the wilful mistakes which this messenger may commit, either fully on fet purpose, to make all go the way which he conceives to be best, upon his passionate affection to it, or disaffection to the contrary; or rather, not fo much with fo plain downright wilfulness; as with an overfwaying prejudice, which has prepossessed his judgment, that the way which he, as from

1

n

Ó

0

e

25

n

e

n

٢,

.

as m from thy guide, bids thee to go, is the only true way: Not that he is fully fure that thy guide did clearly fay fo; but thy messenger thought best to put down clearly this way for thy true way, because his own prejudice of its being so, and his great defire that it should be held by all to be so, have prevailed with him to deliver it clearly to be fo. Moreover, this thy translator or messenger had not immediate access to God's word, in that very hand-writing in which it was written by the scripture-writer, from such; but what he knows, he knows copies as were written by men of unknown fidelity, who, perhaps often were fuch hireling pen-men as had more care to write much, that they might gain much; than to write with all perfect exactness, and to take due pains and care in conferring their transcribed copies with the copies they transcribed. And those very copies also were perhaps written out with the like carelessness. Besides this carelessness, ignorance might likewise cause many a mistake in so long a work, because all, neither knew the languages perfectly which they transcribed, nor did not, perhaps, know so cunningly, those abbreviations which those pen-men used even almost at every word; in which also one writer often differs from another: Hence in a long work numberless mistakes are incident, which foon grow to a far greater number, whilst so many subsequent transcribers out of former mistakers come to add their new mistakes to those former. And to do it in a hand fit to cause their mistakes to be yet more multiplied, when more copies (subject still to the like inconvenience) come to be transcribed out of them successively for many ages. Now thy messenger or translator, in this vast variety of copies, (of which we spoke more in the last chapter) if he

finds but one or two copies, which more favour that way which he would have all go, or thinks in his private judgment to be true; he makes choice to interpret this mistaken copy for God's own word, and fets it down as advantageously as he can, to further his opinion, and his defire to bring such a way into greatest request. From such men as thefe, you are immediately to take that direction for your only rule and guide: And yet, though you fee with your eyes, your only direction to come so indirectly to you; and that you most manifeftly, neither do here judge for yourselves, nor can possibly judge for yourselves in this capital point (comprehending all the points you are to believe;) yet you are taught by all your prime doctors, that, as you are to answer to God for yourfelves in all you believe; fo you must by yourselves also, judge for yourselves in all you believe. Yet (O preposterous! O monsterously preposterous!) you, in this chiefest point of all, must rely upon the authority of a few English translators; who exact of you to rely on them with more confidence than they will permit you to rely upon the authority of a whole general council, seconded by the authority of the gravest fathers which the church of God has had: And you, who are taught to follow and believe nothing but scripture, are now taught without any one text of fcripture to take the translations of men for your only guides, in all and every point of your faith; and fuch translations also as we just now described, and shall here more fully describe. In the mean time note, that here I have one more necessary point, not clearly fet down in scripture, to add to the former fixteen. If any deny this point to be necessary to falvation, let him answer this argument, that is necessary to salvation, without which

T

i

u

fe

16

C

01

01

no

in

Va

tre

W

which I cannot come to be assuredly guided to true faith; but I (who understand not both Greek and Hebrew) cannot, without a truly translated bible, come to be assuredly guided to true faith, the true bible being (as you teach me) the only rule guiding and directing to true faith: Therefore, it is necessary for me, to use a truly translated bible; but no scripture does direct me in the choice of a truly translated bible; therefore scripture does not direct me in all points necessary for me to salvation.

0

0

2

H

0

.

1

1

-

-

e.

r-

y

1;

1-

10

d

10

ce

e,

re ly

nd

d,

an

ry

to

be

A-

ut

2. Here again, I infer, that all that vast number of people, who, knowing not perfectly both Greek and Hebrew, are forced not to judge for themselves which is the true word of God, must of necessity rely upon many uncertainties in this. very point, upon which all their whole faith does rely. First, they must rely upon this uncertainty, whether the copy which this translated bible does interpret to them, were a true copy of the true uncorrupted word of God; which, how great an uncertainty it is, has been shewed in the last fection; where I shewed also (and here you may fee it again) how much more you take your religion upon trust, than we do; even those great doctors, who now fet forth the famous bible. Confess (in their introduction) that copies are only fo far God's true word, as they agree with the true original copy, written by the prophets or apostles. How your translator's copy agrees with the true original, God knows; I am fure, you know not, nor your translator himself. Secondly, It is uncertain, whether your translator did in every place interpret fincerely, and not follow his own private opinions, in expressing some points of contraverly. Thirdly, It is uncertain, whether he were not in several places of so great a work,

careless to express the true sense of his copy, not marking at all times attentively enough, or not using at all times due labour to search for the true sense of such and such a word, in such and fuch a place. Fourtbly, It is uncertain, whether your translator's skill was great enough to perform his duty in fo vast a work as the translation of the bible is, even though he should use as great pains as he could. A faith relying upon fo many uncertainties, for certain cannot but be uncertain; but all the faith, which fuch protestants have, is thus uncertain, unless they have skill and will to use the Hebrew and Greek bible: Therefore their faith is not certain nor divine in any one point, because in all points they rely upon a translator's authority, which is subject to so many uncertainties. See this clearly confessed by prime protestant doctors, whose words I give you hereafter, Sea. 16. N. 7.

3. And, that you may fee this the clearer, I will fet before your eyes, several undeniable proofs of the gross falfity which is in the translators of your own religion; in whom you trust most; that hence you may see; how little they are to be trusted by you in so great a matter; especially to be trusted more than a general council. Luther (that great beginner of this reformation) did fet forth a translation, which, how good it was, you shall hear from your great doctor Zuinglius, Lib. de facra, fol. 412. Luther was (says he) a foul corrupter, and borrible falsifier of God's word. One who followed the Marcionists and Arians, that razed out such places of boly writ as were against bim. Thou dost (fays he to Luther) corrupt the word of God, thou art seen to be a manifest and common corrupter and perverter of the boly scriptures. How much are we assamed of thee who bave t

1

E

t

10

bave bitberto esteemed thee, &c. And Luther himself, twenty years after, confessed he had often erred, because he had trusted too much the glosses of the Rabbins: as witnesseth Cochlaus in actis Lutheri. Behold here another way for translators to err, of which we thought not before. It is also worth the noting which Bellarmin, in his fermon upon Pentecost, says of Luther, Those (says he) who most diligently bave read the books of Luther, do bear witness, that be, in the new testament only (so small a part of the bible) bas changed above a thousand places. He did set forth the gospels seven times, every time most different from all the former, as the same Bellarmin there noteth. So much for Luther. After him came Zuinglius, and fet forth a bible, with the help of his disciples, which being printed at Zurich, the printer fent one of them to Lutber; but he rejecting it, fent it him back again, as you may fee in the protestants apology, Tract. 1. S. 10. Subd. 4. out of which place I cannot but add divers most pertinent things to our prefent purpofe. This apology then fets down all that here follows; as that Luther faid of those Zuinglian translators, That they were fools, affes, antichrists, deceivers, and of an asslike under standing. That Beza reproves the translation of Oecolampadius (who with Zuinglius and Carolostadius did first begin your reformation in point of the real presence:) He then having set forth his bible at Bazil, Beza said thus of it, The Basilian translation is in many places wicked, and altogether differing from the mind of the Holy Ghoft. The fame great Beza accounts that so highly esteemed translation of Castalio, to be sacrilegious, wicked and etbnical. But Castalio was quit with Beza, for he writ a whole book against the translation which Beza made, saying, That to note all bis errors (in translating) would require a great volume

e

0

r

u

d.

at

id

6-

bo

ve

volume. But Beza in his annotations, goes on. and calls Castalio's translation false, foolist, unskilful, bold, blasphemous, vitious, ridiculous, cursed, erroneous, wicked, perverfe. Hitherto thou feest these translations of thy prime doctors condemned by the authority of other no less famous translators. And both those who were condemned thus, and who did thus condemn, were men more famous among you than is any one translator of any one English bible; so that a greater authority, than is the authority of that man (whose translation you take for the only rule of faith) tells you, that translations of far more learned translators than yours, are so full of corruptions, that great volumes would not contain them: How then can you hope that your less skilful English translator has done his part better than any of your greatest doctors. But I must yet further ask you, how you know this on your own knowledge? And how is it possible for you here to judge for yourself, which your doctors so often tell you, you shall be able to do if you will follow them? Do not you here again fee, how in a most important point, you are enforced to trust an incomparable less authority than that is of any one of our general councils, which they to strictly charge you not to trust even in far less points? O blindness!

k

il

k

h

a

th

pr

tic

pr

ble

bil

CO

COI

tre

tra

Co

and

in t

his

pro

omi

ome

lefs,

bool

tran

4. But you cannot but see how much you are gulled herein, and how impossible it is for you to judge of truth and faith by these English translations, when you shall yet hear what I have to say of them. Your first English bible was set forth in the days of Henry the eighth by Tindal, whom yours esteem the apostle of England in this reformation. May I not trust him, will you say? Truly Bp. Tunstal noted no less than two thousand carruptions in his translation in the new testament

only, as witnesseth the Remist testament in the end of the table of certain places, &c. How little a part of the bible is the new testament? And yet. two thousand corruptions in that only? Yet furely, in queen Elizabeth's days, who lived fo very long. and did fee the gospel so well perfected, our translations (wilt thou say) were compleatly exact: For then, if ever our doctors had the true spirit. Indeed then they were so confident their translations did agree with the word of God, that the queen (whom all your doctors by oath acknowledge governess of your church in England) in the 26th year of her reign (as Sir Richard Baker writes in that year) did command Wbitgift, her archbishop of Canterbury, to set forth three articles to be subscribed by all her clergy, and the fecond of these was, That the book of common prayer contains nothing contrary to the word of God. By reason of the urging this subscription, many marking well, that in their Commonprayer, their Epistles, Gospels, Pfalms, &c. were contained, all which were taken out of their bible; and knowing by their learning, that their bible, even then, was full of gross corruptions, contrary to the word; began now openly to difcover these errors. Hence divers ministers in a treatife to her excellent majesty, spoke thus, Our translation of the plalms, comprised in our book of Common-prayer, does, in addition, fubtraction and alteration, differ from the truth of the Hebrew in two bundred places at least. And Mr. Burges in his apology, Seel. 6. writes thus, How Shall I approve under my band, a translation which has many omissions, many additions, which sometimes obsures, Sometimes perverts the sense, being sometimes senseless, sometimes contrary. And Carliel says in his book of Christ's descent to hell. P. 116. The translators thereof (the English bible then used)

bave depraved the fense, or obscured the truth, and deceived the ignorant. In many places, they detort the scripture from the right sense; and finally, they shew themselves to love darkness more than light, falfbood more than truth. When king James began now to reign, the minsters of Lincolnsbire, in an abridgment of a book, delivered to the king, P. 11, 12. of the English translation, speak thus, It takes away from the text, adds to the text, and this sometimes to the changing or obscuring of the meaning of the Holy Ghost: A translation which is absurd and senseless, perverting in many places the meaning of the Holy Ghost. These things were so notorious, that Sir Richard Baker, an earnest old protestant (as now they call them) in the first year of king James's reign, writes thus, He called to Hampton-court divers of his bishops and divines, to see what they could fay against the present government of the English church. In this conference, Dr. Reynolds mentioned, That there might be a new translation of the bible; because the present translations were corrupt, and not answerable to the truth of the original; whereof he alledged divers examples, particularly that in the hundred and fifth pfalm, v. 28. where it is faid, They were not obedient; in the original, it is They were not disobedient: To this it was agreed, that a new translation should be made. Thus far Sir Richard, word for word. By all which it is evident, that your bishops, doctors, divines, &c. in queen Elizabeth's days, even to her last day, did subscribe, and by public authority were ordered to subscribe, that falsifying word of God, to be the true word of God; though it were flatly contrary (as in the place now cited) to the true word. How know you

that the divines now, though they miss not always

ai

th

of

de

th

th pr

of the 0

y

f

f

i-

į-

15

d.

5,

b-

si-

d;

ce

ou

10

in the same places perhaps, yet, perhaps they may miss in others of as great consequence? The scripture was held then as confidently to be the only rule of faith, and cited as fast, and as thick, for God's word then, as it is now: And yet, now your very bible coming forth on that occasion, does as good as tell you the former bible was not God's true word. Divers years, after the resolution made, of fetting forth this new bible, there still remained such open complaints of the corruptions of the word of God, that Mr. Broughton (a man as skilful in Hebrew and Greek as any was in England) according to his skill, did give this censure in his advertisements of corruptions to the bishops; saying, That their public translation of scriptures into English, is such, as it pervertetb the text of the old testament, in eight bundred forty eight places, and that it causeth millions of millions to reject the new testament, and to run to eternal flames. In what case then has this your doctrine put you, which hath taken you off from following the judgment of the church in a general council, to make you judge for your own felves: When your learned divines (who made fo corrupted translations) did so ill judge for them and others? Upon thyself then, thou canst not safely rely in this point, neither canst thou rely upon thy translators, who have used thee thus: Find me then, for God's sake, find me, if thou canst, any where any, but half so sure a ground, as is that of the church, which is the pillar and ground of truth. Thou dost not only venture the being deceived in this great point of the uprightness of thy only rule and judge; but it is manifest, that thou art deceived: For thy rule (which is thy present English translated bible) still stands accused of many and gross corruptions. Not to trouble thee much, I will tell thee only of one or two; F 2

Thy translator had a mind to make thee believe. that faith only could fave thee; a damnable doctrine, unknown to the greatest doctors of the church, which could not be, were it the only thing which did justify and fave us, as thy translator would perfuade thee, when translating what Christ said to the blind man, whom he cured, Luke 18. 43. he makes Christ to fay, thy faith faved thee, in place of faying, thy faith has made thee whole. Again, though Christ, by way of counsel, did propose in a general manner, the embracing of a chaste single life, Mat. 19. v. 11 and 12. faying, He that is able to receive it, let bim receive it: Thy translator had a mind to make thee believe, not only that every one did not receive this doctrine, but he makes Christ in the former verse tell us, All men cannot receive this faying. Whereas Christ said only, All men do not receive this faying, as is evident out of the Greek. Is this fair dealing? Is it all one to fay. All men do not lead fingle lives; and to fay, All men cannot lead fingle lives, though they use fasting, praying, &c. This is as wilful an error, as it would be in one who heard me say (and also fet it down in writing to prevent mistake) All men are not boneft, should report that I said, All men cannot be boneft. When I fee a translator not to make any confcience of fo wilfully falfifying God's own word, in favour of his own opinion; have not I just reason to say, I cannot be sure of my faith in all points, if I (upon this man's authority) take his translation as the only rule of my faith in all points? What more clear?

which those great masters of the ancient languages, who now set forth that mighty work of the London bible, in so many learned ancient languages, who

who in the introduction to this their bible (of which I spoke in the last Sea. N. 8.) spoke thus, It is not necessary for the producing faith in the people, that there should be a translation wholly infallible; feeing that de facto it is evident, that among those numberless translations, which are extant this day in Europe, there is none of all them which is of divine and infallible authority: For faith does rely on the authority or veracity of God, which always is certain and infallible, although all the means be not infallible; For translations bave only lo far authority, as far as they agree with the first own-band written original: But they are sufficient means of faith, when they contain (who knows when that is) all things necessary to salvation, without any error against faith or good manners: So they. Let us examine what they fay by parts, as it lies in order, and that in order to our present purpose only; and not in order to examine how true all they fay is. If true faith can be had now, without any infallible translation, then the bible is not our only guide to true faith, and our only judge in points controverted in faith; for this judge must be infallible, as all your doctors teach. If you answer, the judge is not the translated copy, but the original in Greek and Hebrew. I ask you, what shall almost all the world do to hear this infallible judge? For almost all are deaf to all that is spoken in Greek and Hebrew. If there be not one infallible translation in Europe at this day; how at this day are all deluded, who. are taught on the one fide to judge for themfelves, and on the other fide are told that they cannot handle the ruler, by which they should rule their judgment in all points: But they must be contented with a fallible lesbian rule of lead. bent as it pleased the translator? Again, how is it possible God should bid the people to fearth the F 3; truth.

diseas

truth in the bible, not only as the only place to find it in; but also as the only place for them to find it in: For God knew all people could not fearch truth in any bibles, but fuch as are translated into a language they understand; God knew all these translations were liars, if indeed they be fo as you fay. Can God bid any man feek for the truth, only at a liar's mouth? Yea, would God, who loves fouls fo well, give them no better means to know the truth wholly necessary to falvation? True it is, faith does rely upon the truth of God, who faid fuch a thing to be fo and so; but if my translator tell me that God said fuch a thing was fo and fo; and yet God faid no fuch thing, but another thing very different, in place of which, my translator ignorantly or wilfully obtrudes this thing; here manifestly I am left leaning, with all my force upon a lie. And whereas you tell us, that translations (the only rule we can handle) bave only fo far divine authority, as far as they agree with the first own bandwritten originals. This is small comfort to us, to whom it is impossible to know how far this is. Yea, yourselves know not which be the true own hand-written originals, which you confess to have perished, though you say, that they be faithfully restored by your laborious gathering and conferring together, more exquisite copies than hitherto have been published; which, how true it is, I know not. And then, fecondly, without we also know the languages, which you present unto us very faithfully, (as we perhaps purpose) it is impossible for us to know how far our translations agree with the originals; therefore, it is impossible for us to know how far we may trust to their authority as divine, or fuspect it as human. And so by clear confequence, it is impossible for us, to know when big ble Cod thould bid, the people to fearth that

and where we may give a most full, undoubted asfent to what we find translated in our bibles. Is this the comfort you leave us at last, when, upon our leaving to rely upon the rock of the church, you promised to make us men, knowing what we do in all points; And now, we are fure we know not what we do in any? For we know not what our only rule bids us to hold upon God's authority, or what that man bids upon his authority only to hold, when offering us his own translation, he bids us take it for a divine rule; which, if he gives not, we are gulled even in that point which nearest concerns our salvation. Indeed, you conclude with a small crum of comfort, when you tell us, Translations are sufficient means to divine faith, when they contain all things necessary to salvation, without any error against faith or goodmanners. But I pray reflect, how wholly imposfible it is for us to tell when they do this, without knowing first, for certain, all the points neceffary to falvation: About which, you yourselves are not yet agreed, neither can you give us up a list or catalogue of them. Nay, I may affirm, that no such list or catalogue can be given, (though even here it be so apparently necesfary) that thence we might fee whether there be any fuch error in our English bibles, in those matters: Yea, all of you tell us, that there is no way to know what is necessary to salvation, but by the true bible; and yet we, (poor fouls,) cannot possibly come to know which is the true bible, containing all points necessary to falvation, without any error of faith or manners, until we know first, that a true bible has told us so. And again, we cannot know that bible to be fo true, which told us fo; until we know, that that very bible contained all points necessary to salvation, without any error in faith or manners. This is not

SELECTED FROM SEC

not only to blind us (as you fay the papifts do, when they make us follow the church:) but it is to use us as the Philistians used Sampson; first to put out our eyes, and then to make us run round in a mill, as blind horses do in horse-mills: For no circle is rounder, and goes more about and about again in the same footsteps, than the circle we are made run in blindfold; by having no other affurance, that the only rule of all our faith is a bible, containing all things necessary to falvation, without error against faith and manners; and having no other affurance of what is necessary. to falvation, what not; what is against faith, what not; what is against manners, what not; but by another bible, of which bible's truth we have no other affurance than the former; but we Aill require another bible to affure us of the like things; and this other will require yet another, and lo without end. What circle can be more endless? Har cortain, fall

Sect. 6.

A tenth argument, That the scripture cannot decide the controversy about the truth of St. Matthew's gospel. And that our adversaries do no not believe this gospel with divine faith.

HERE also I must needs propose a difficulty, which, in the principles of your religion, I conceive to be unanswerable. You do no less believe all things written in St. Matthew's gospel, than you believe all things written in any other book of the scripture: But even your doctors of the highest form, have no other authority for all things in St. Matthew's gospel, but the authority of a translation made by one, whom none of us Shour any error in faith or tran err.

all know; and fo we can neither affure ourselves of his fidelity, nor of his skill, nor of his care to use a true copy, nor I of his industry in the use thereof, &c. Now you tell us (and it is. true) that translations (prescinding from any decree of the church approving of them) have only fo far authority, as far as they agree with the true original: But it is impossible for you (great doctors) to know how far the translated copies of St. Matthew's gospel agree with the originat, because, for these many ages, there has not been known extant, in the whole world, any one copy of the original hand-writing of St. Matthew, who. did write in that kind of Hebrew, which the Terus spoke in his days, as all and every one of the ancient fathers (who have writ of this matter, and whose works we have) do testify: And St. Jerome libro de scriptorib. ecole fiafticis, affirms. himself to have seen, and to have also written. out that Hebrew copy. But for these many ages. no one Hebrew copy has appeared in the world, which with any fufficient probability, could be shewed to be a true copy; whence it is evidenty that none of you all can tell, how far the translations we have of that Hebrew copy, do agree with the Hebrew copy; therefore, not one of you all can tell, how far these translations, which we have now, be of divine authority, and how far now, we may admit them as God's undoubted word; there being no reason known to us, why we should admit them more in one place (upon St. Matthew's authority) than in another; and there being no reason why we should admit of the whole translation, made by I know not whom; rather than of other translations, whom we know, to have been made with all the best industries which human ability can afford; whence I can neither admit the whole translation as divine, nor anv

any part of it, rather than the part I admit not, I not knowing any one part to agree more with the true original, than the other. All the whole gospel I cannot receive as divine, for no translation at all, (much less the translations of a man unknown) is to be admitted as divine and infallible, there being no one fuch in all Europe as you fay. Hence I demonstrate, that you believe not St. Matthew's gospel with divine faith: For you cannot fay, that you give credit to any one thing in it, for the authority of the writer of it, because you know not any one thing delivered from God by the writer unto you, but upon the authority of the translation, which is no farther divine than agreeing with the true copy; which agreement you neither know to be in this one point, or any other you can name. How can I know, how the translation agrees with the original, if I know not what the original faith? a need ovad of

2. Again, to believe St. Matthew's gospel, is as necessary to falvation, as to believe St. Luke's or Stufobn's; but no infallible scripture stranslations not being infallible) does tell you that St. Matthew's gofpel is the undoubted word of God: How will you then prove this by scripture against the Marcionists, the Cerdonists, and the Manicheans, who deny this gospel to be God's word? All points necessary to falvation, you say, are plainly fet down in scripture; shew me this point plainly fet down. Here then I have one necessary point more, not plainly fet down in scripture, which makes the former feventeen points to be eighteen. Neither can you fay, that, by the very reading this translation, you can discover a light, shewing it, as clearly as the fun, to be God's word: For, though I can see no reason, why such light might not be discovered, as well in true translations, as salmit the whole translation as divine, nor

in true originals; yet, because you of your religion, who only have eyes to fee this light, do profess (as we have lately feen your greatest fcripture doctors to profess) that there is not one infallible translation in Europe; and because we see. even fuch doctors as they are, not so much as to hope to discover, by such a light, true translations from falle ones; but to bestow great pains in conferring the feveral copies of their feveral translations, with the best copies of the originals which they can find; and by the agreeing, or not agreeing with these best copies, to approve or reprove these translations; we are by this certified, that they trust nothing to this clear light, which if it were a reality, and not a real fancy, were the best guide of all, and would save them infinite pains: Yea, whatfoever (to avoid our arguments) they boast of this light, which yet even in the approving or reproving the copies of the original itself, they trust nothing to it. If I thought, they did trust to such an ungrounded imagination, neither I, nor any one of my opinion (nor of thine neither, as I think) would ever buy one copy of their translations, we but the atelin

3. Now, if you cannot discover any such light, assuring you of the truth of all things in St. Matthew's gospel, I am sure you cannot do so in St. John's or St. Luke's, or any other: And your own consciences cannot but tell you, that the light discovering itself in St. Matthew, is as great as in any other book of scripture; but this light is now clearly shewed to be unsufficient to prove St. Matthew's gospel to be divine, it being only a translation which your best doctors confess to be fallible; neither is there any means to know one part of it to be more infallible than another, upon the authority of the writer thereof; because we know not which part agrees with the true

copy of the writer. You fay you fix your faith upon what is translated, and not upon the translation: But, I fay, if you fix your faith upon what is translated by a false translator, you may foon fix your faith upon a lie; at least, you cannot tell when you do fo, and when you do not; for you know not whether the thing delivered be agreeable to God's word, or only to the interpreter's fancy; especially when you know not of what credit the interpreter is. Do you know it because your fancy also tells you, this is God's word? Then, thus we may have a double fantaftical affurance, and nothing elfe; one from the unknown interpreter's fancy, another from thy own. I thought your faith had relied on God's written word. What written word is that which can neither be shewed affuredly weitten in any original, nor in any copy, nor in any translation of the original copy? If you fly at last to that miferable thift, as to fay, that the illumination of the spirit can tell you God's word, without the mediation of any certain undoubted means, conveying it unto you; then you must needs be prophets all, and every one of you. Who ever heard of such a church in this world, in which there be as many prophets as there be men and women? This is not the church of St. Paul, in which he faid, I Con. 12. 19. Be all prophets? And in which be gave only some prophets, Epb. 4. I.I. But all of you, who know immediately from God, that which no mediate means conveyeth unto you, must needs be true prophets. If this be true, then also any English clown, by the like illumination, communicated to him in the reading of his English translation, may as well, and better, (because by divine illumination) be affured, that all is true which is in his English translated bible; and fo, by good confequence, १११७३

be affured that it is a very true translation, though he neither knew Greek not Hebrew. And indeed, your Greek and Hebrew only helps you to confer the translation with the originals; but St. Matthew's original copy, not being for many ages visible in the world, can be no more conferred with by your Hebreciam, than by this English clown: And it his illumination affures him of all that is written in St. Matthew's gospel; we will all, with one consent, grant, that it may affure him as well, that all other parts of the scriptures be God's word. What then need you talk of conferring with the originals, or knowing Greek or Hebrew.

4. Now at last, I hope, when you so univerfally allow to every man and woman who believes St. Matthew's gospel, so large a measure of divine illumination, that it is sufficient to ground an infallible belief; You will confess yourselves to freak most inconfequently, if you offer to deny the like illumination to the whole church reprefentative in a general council: So now we shall have a church infallible; which is all Lam endeavouring here by degrees to prove. And tell me not, that you are not affured, whether they in councils have used the due means to obtain this illumination; for I shall as easily tell you, that neither I, nor my brethren, be affured, that you, and your brethren, have used also the due means to obtain this illumination concerning every books chapten and verse of scripture, affuring them all to be God's word; especially when they speak contradictions fo fall as we fee they do

We Roman con Alice and far from deling thresholy Ohoff this wrong t We they kettering was dis-

be affected thrown is a very one translation, though he meier buten Gent, no Seat. 7, and indent over Grand and Addrew only helps you to confer

An eleventh argument, That the scripture cannot decide the manifold controverses about the true fense of the scripture : Therefore in their belief of the true fense thereof, our adversaries have no divine faith; nor no fure ground of their religion. all, with one confeat, great, that it may affer

N the former fections I have given you eighteen points, all necessary to salvation, and yet not one of them plainly fet down in scripture: Now I add a nineteenth point, which, though most necessary, yet, it is so far from being cleared by only scripture, that almost all our controversies do arise from hence, without ever being filenced by the definitive sentence of God, delivered in the bible: An evident fign that God, in the scripture only, has not passed the clear decisive fentence of all necessary controverses: For all parties submit unto that fentence, and yet none of them is clearly cast thereby. They do then the holy scripture much wrong, who say, that God did write it on purpose to end all controversies; and yet they cannot possibly shew how God has done this compleatly: And fo, by consequence, they are driven (to the scandal of all christians) to make God fall short of effecting that by scripture, which they fay he intended to effect; to wit, the ending of all controversies; which with our eyes we all fee wax endless, even among those, who all submit to scripture as God's word. We Roman catholics are far from doing the Holy Ghost this wrong: We fay, scripture was dictated by him, for many most high ends, belonging to the knowledge and love of God, and betonging

longing to the increase of all virtue and hatred of fin, arming us with patience in God's service, by proposing most comfortable motives to us : So St. Paul teaches us, What things soever have been written, to our learning they are written, that by the patience and confolation of the scriptures we may have bope, and thus walking chearfully by those comfortable examples, and these rare documents, and fervent exhortations, given us in scripture to all virtue, we may gain the end for which God made us. Yea, we add, that scripture wants not this honour, of providing sufficiently for our unity in faith, about all points which can ever fall in controversies; not that it ends all these by itself alone; but that it bids us have our recourse, in these cases, to his church, and to bear ber, and that under pain of being accounted as a Publican or Heathen; and telling us, That the gates of bell shall not prevail against ber, by any false doctrine; telling us, That she is the pillar and ground of truth; that he is with ber all days even to the confummation of the world; and that be bas prayed bis father to give her another comforter, that he may abide with her for ever, the spirit of truth, who shall teach and suggest unto her all things what soever Christ has taught his apostles, guiding her into all truth. He tells us also, that he has given us such doctors, and fuch paftors, as may secure her from circumvention of error; for his covenant with her is this, My spirit which is upon thee, and the words which I have put in thy mouth ; Shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy feed, nor out of the mouth of thy feed's feed, from hence forth and for ever. And that her fun shall no more go down; for the Lord will be unto ber an everlasting light; she shall be a kingdom standing for ever; that the nation and kingdom which Mall

swall not serve ber, shall perish. No national synods shall justify any nation's division from her. communion. All thefe texts I shall shew to be fpoken of the church; by which (I think) it is as apparent by scripture, that God intended not, in controversies of faith, to instruct us by scripture only; the very scripture sending us so often to the church, as also to her traditions; as 2 These 2. 15. Hold ye fast, and (to do this) bold the traditions which ye have learned, whether by word, or by epiftle: And again, 2 Tim. 2. The things which thou baft heard of me by many witnesses (he saith not by his writing only) thefe commend to faithful men, which shall be fit to teach others also. And again, Those things which ye have been taught, and beard, and feen in me, thefe do. Who fees not that we were to do, not only what we had read, but what had been taught us, and what we had only heard or feen faining in public practice. But of this hereafter fee in the next Sea. N. 4. 5, 6, 7, 8. God then teacheth us all things necessary in scripture; first, by delivering many things clearly in it; Secondly, By fending us for the rest to the church, and to her traditions: By the church's pastors alone he instructed some sufficiently in faith; as he did St. Paul, to whom it was faid, AS Q 6. Go into the city, and it fool! be told thee what thou must do; and as he did Cornelius to whom it was likewife faid; Call fan one Simon, whose sirname is Peter, and be will tell thee what thou oughtest to do. AR. 10. 2.5, 6. What you object to the contrary I answer, Sett. 10. N. 6.

F

fe

Ħ

U

to

m

21

in

2. I return to you, who fay, God intended by feripture only to teach us all necessary points; which if he has not done, you make him deficient in an unworthy manner. And that he has not done it, I have already shewed in eighteen necessary

fary points: And now I add, that by fcripture alone, he does not teach us the true fense of scripture: And yet the true sense thereof, is that which must give sentence in the decision of all controversies; the sense is the kernel, the life. the foul of the text; miss that, miss all: A wrong and falle fense is no less dangerous than a false text obtruded for a true one. Hence Tertul: De præscrip. The sense adultered is like perilous authe stile corrupted. And St. Ferom Ep. Ad. Gal. faith. The gofpel is not in the word but in the sense; not in the bark, but in the sap. Wherefore Dr. Reynolds, in his conference with Mr. Hart, p. 58. confesseth, That it is not the shew but the fense of the words, that must decide controverses. So he. It is not then the text as it founds, but the text thus expounded, which must end (as you fay) all our debates: And yet this expounding thus, or thus, is that very thing which first makes all our prime debates and controverfles; and it is also that very thing which makes them to be endless. This I still inculcate, because.

3. This, and the true reason of this, is exceedingly to be noted: For it is not the text, but the text thus, or thus expounded, which is to decide controversies: Not the dead letter, but the true sense of it, delivers the sentence of the Holy Ghost. The text, as expounded by private judgments, is not to be held God's undoubted word; unless we first know the interpretation thereof to be indeed true, and agreeing wholly to the mind of the Holy Ghost; which, to know, is a thing wholly impossible without a revelation; and yet, until we come to know this, we shall neither have reason to agree in one inward faith interiorly, nor in one outward profession exteriorly.

to se the truly interpreted for

fe

orly; but still our hearts and lips will be divided. This we fee as clearly as noon-day-light, happen among those who take scripture only for their judge; which all heretics did ever use, and will ever use to do so, to escape being condemned or cast by any other judgment-seat. Hence, they all still appeal to scripture; for then, they know beforehand, all that can be faid; and know also, by what interpretations to shew, all that can be brought out of scripture against them, not to be spoken by God in any sense contrary to the opinion they hold. And thus contrary opinions, grounded in contrary interpretations, are held, and will be held until the world's end; if there be no other judge to end them, but the fentence given by God in the text of scripture; not as the text founds, but as the interpreter expounds, Here, with all possible care, I would have you note, That all the faith which our adversaries have, relying on their interpretations, which are fallible, can be but fallible and human: For they believe, all that they believe, because they fully persuade themselves that, God says that thing in the scripture, taken not meerly as the words found, but taken as they verily apprehend and judge the true interpretation to be fo, or fo. This is the ground of their belief in all points; and therefore this is fundamental to their religions and that as properly as any thing can be called fundamental to any religion: For it is the foundation itself, on which every fingle point of their belief, and their whole belief in general is fo wholly built, that they rest upon nothing but this. Where first I observe, that you and we must needs differ in the most fundamental point which concerns religion: For we believe nothing at all, because, by our private judgment only, we judge it to be the truly interpreted fense of fcripscripture; but because we know it interpreted so by the church, affisted by the Holy Ghost, in all her public interpretations. You will believe no one point (for example, that there is a Trinity,) for this reason only; because, forsooth, you hold the church fallible in her public interpretations of God's word: And we will not believe any point of our faith (for example, the Trinity) upon that ground; because we know affuredly that our own judgments, in our private interpretations of scripture, are most fallible. Whence it is evident, that in those very points in which we do agree, we fundamentally disagree: Because we disagree in the very foundation of our belief, concerning those points. Now, in point of belief, we must mainly attend, not only to the truth of what we believe; but to the ground upon which we build our belief. For, if we think ourselves to build our belief securely, upon a foundation which is deceitful, (as our own interpretation is, and the church's not:) we shall be soon led to believe things which are false; as we see a world of people do, by relying on the scripture as interpreted by their private judgment. The Turk believes that there is a God, because his Alcoran (which is the rule of his faith) teacheth him fo. Now, because he believes the truth upon a deceitful foundation; he, upon the same foundation, builds the belief of a thousand falsities. Add to this, that this judgment of the interpreter (who, according to you, is every private man, yea, every private woman, for his or her own self:) This judgment, I say, is most weak, and many points of faith are matters very hard to conceive, and unfold; and controversies also are exceedingly entangled; and the conferring texts with texts, like and unlike, rather increaseth un-Cers and the course, for baccing boundebed many

othus

certainty of hitting right, than it helps to any full affured certainty: What then more fure. than a most unassired proceeding, in this interpreter? Again, private judgments being almost as various as private faces (yea, often differing from themselves) infinite variety of interpretations must needs proceed from infinite private men's judgments, so very various. You may see this in your patriarch Luther; who, in matters of highest moment, is noted no less than four/core times, to have taught flat contradictions: As you may see shewed in the end of the first tome of our learned Coccius. Not only your Martin Luther thus contradicted himself in words; but also your Martin Bucer contradicted himself in exterior change from religion to religion: At one time be fully judged those texts of the scripture, which speak of the sacrament of the body of our Lord, to be truly interpreted by the Roman catholics; and so he believed Christ's body to be really present, and to be adored in the facrament. After this, he judged most fincerely, that the Lutberans did truly interpret those texts, and fo he became a Lutheran, holding the real presence, but denying Christ's body to be there adored. Thirdly, After this, he most fincerely judged the interpretation of those texts, given by Zuinglius, to be the only true sense of the Holy Ghost, and then he became a Zuinglian, denying Christ's body to be really present in the facrafor which Lutber termed him perfidious. Fourthly, He once more most fincerely judged Luther's. interpretation of those texts to be the truer sense of the Holy Ghoft, and once more became a Lutheran: And therefore, in his first edition of his Commentaries, upon the fixth of St. John, and twenty-fixth of St. Matthew, He afteth pardon of God and the church, for having bewitched many with

t

ì

8

I

P

C

C

b

T

V

with the berefy of Zuinglius. Fifthly, Yet after this, he fincerely judged again Zuinglius's his interpretation of those texts to be the only true one: And this interpretation, he did publicly profess and defend at Cambridge; to which university, he was called out of Germany, as a prime doctor, to help us here in England, in our new begun reformation. And it is to be noted, That at every one of these his changes, he still used most earnest protestations of undoubted certainty. conceived from the scriptures; as you may see in the most learned Breerly, in his Treatife of St. Austin's religion, in the preface, where he cites his authors for all these changes. To which, I add, that after all those changes, he is at last affirmed to have died a Jew, by Poffevin in notis Verbi Dei and Vlenbergius Caufa 12. And indeed. for one who has first believed scripture as interpreted by every man's private judgment, to be to every man the only ground of all he is to believe concerning Christ, and his doctrine: And then has confidered after this, how groundless a ground this is; and how, if this be the only means left by Christ for unity in his church, his church is most pitifully provided: For in this most highly important point, it cannot but breed a strong temptation, to fall quite out of love with Christ and his religion, in those who will not admit any thought of feeking for a better ground amongst us, where it might be fo eafily found.

4. Questionless, if Christ be God, as he is; and if he truly loves these souls, for which he died, he would not have failed to provide them of some more assured means to know that true saith, without which, he will not save them; than this means is, of leaving them to the bible, as interpreted by each one as he thinks rightest.

What law-maker in any common-wealth, was ever yet found any where fo imprudent, as only to leave the people of his common-wealth fo miferably provided (for the final ending all their controversies) as they should be, if he did only leave them a law-book for their fole and only judge in all their differences, without any living judge to expound it with unappealable authority. Well, now the church of Christ is a community, which was to be spread over the whole face of the earth, and intended to last until the confummation of the world: And therefore, this community, above all others, had the greatest need of a most super-abundantly-sufficient means to end all their controversies, which do not concern their temporal, but eternal welfare. A world of controversies must needs be still rising in a community, concerning fo many forts of people, and those still further and further removed from Christ's time, until the very end of the world. Wherefore this community had been most miserably and pitifully provided for, in point of unity in faith; and Christ should have gathered together a most heart-disunited fort of people, if in all their numberless differences, after all their reading of scriptures, conferring of places, and fuch like rules as you prescribe; they should have no other means left them to end those controversies, but the written text of the bible, to be expounded according as they can guess at the intention of the Holy Ghost. True faith consists in the interior judgment; if then Christ desired, they should be of one faith, he defired also, they should be of one interior judgment; But how could the wisdom of God expect this unity in the inward judgment, knowing so well, that every one of these judgments were so exceedingly ditdifferent in framing several judgments, and that even after they have used all the rules which you

give them.

5. By this discourse, without going further. thou mayest once more see the ungroundedness of all they whole belief, relying only upon the word of God: As this word is expounded and understood by thy judgment, which in far easier matters, has deceived thee a thousand times, and may do fo in this hard matter, in which a world of better understandings than thine, do vastly differ from thee. If thou do answer, that thou reliest not on thy judgment, but on the word of God. I ask, whether thou dost rely on the word of God, just as the letter sounds? Thou must say no. How then? Thou must needs say, that thou dost rely upon it, as it is expounded by thy own judgment. This also appears by the infinite con-trariety of expositions and interpretations given by fo many relying (just as thou dost) upon the word of God; infomuch, that there be no fewer than two hundred feveral interpretations of these four words, This is my body; which interpretations, although they be not all allowed of by thy religion, yet they all of them proceed from this very ground of thy religion, of taking the word of God, not as it founds, nor as expounded by the church, but as every one in his private judgment does really think it ought to be expounded. Wherefore, upon the whole matter, it is all one to rely upon a man's private judgment, and to rely upon the scripture, as interpreted by his own private judgment. See the vast variety of religions, lately sprung up by following this principle, in my first Sect. N. 23. If thou repliest that thou dost not trust to, and rely upon thy judgment, but upon the spirit of God. which thou knowest assuredly to rule this judgment. beliquenz)

t

t

W

1:

h

ar

de

tu

W

m

tai

no

the

div

Col

Th

to the

we

pof

tear

ment, fecuring it from all milunderstanding of God's word; this thy answer will have many difficulties. First, How canst thou, without high prefumption, assume to thy private felf, so secure an affiftance of the spirit (afforedly preserving thee from all error, in thy private judgment) when thou dost so pertinaciously deny, that the church representative itself (when it judgeth in a general council for the whole world of believers) is affured fo well in their public judgment, as thou art in thy private? And yet, because thou feest their judgment quite contrary to thee, thou must fall into this presumptuous paradox. Secondly, How comes there to be fo mighty contrariety in judgments, among men, confessedly guided as furely by the spirit, as thou art? Thirdly, No one fingle doctor of the primitive church, did ever fo much as pretend to have this affurance of truth of his interpretation from the spirit. Canft thou prudently believe thyfelf to have a greater gift in this kind, than any one of the hofiest doctors of the church ever yet had? Fourthly, If thou beeft not a prophet, and also, if all those of thy religion be not prophets (which was not in St. Paul's church, as I shewed in the last Sect. N. 3.) you cannot possibly know, with any full affurance, that the Holy Ghost does affist you; because nothing, but the word of God can secure you of this; and it is no where written in the word of God, that you, A. B. by your private judgment, can infallibly expound all texts in the scripture concerning necessary points. And if you, by your private interpretation do expound any text or texts of scripture so, as to fecure you of this; yet you are affuredly to know, that you cannot affuredly know this interpretation of those texts to be most certainly true: For to know affuredly these texts to be rightly expounded

expounded by you, you must be assured from some other text, about the right understanding of which text, there will be still the same difficulty. and the same certain uncertainty; until, without bringing any text, you can prove yourfelf certainly to be thus infallibly affifted in your interpretation. And because you prove this without a text, we are not to believe you, who teach us. that nothing is to be believed, as infallibly true. which is not written in the bible: In all which I am fure, it is not written, that you A. B. are a true believer; and therefore, though it were written there, That all true believers had this affistance of the spirit: You were never the nearer. Fifthly, How prepofteroully ridiculous is it to hold yourfelf infallible in declaring God's word. and yet not to hold the whole church infallible in declaring or interpreting the same?

6. Wherefore, your last refuge is to say, that all points necessary are clearly set down in scripture; which I have shewed (and shall further shew) to be manifestly false: And you may even with your fingers touch the falshood of it, in this most necessary point of knowing which is the certain undoubted true sense of scripture. For, in things which are clearly to be feen, there ufeth not to be variety (and infinite variety) of judgments, as we have feen there is, in interpreting the necessary texts of scripture; insomuch, as no divine, by scripture only, can convince an Arian Cibler, as I shewed, Sect. 1. N. 5. Although this Cobler holds also scripture for his only judge. This variety of interpretations (one flatly opposite to the other) shews evidently the scripture in these points not to be evidently clear. Again, if we mark it, this answer is very little to the purpose in our adversaries principles: For first, they teach, that our catholic Roman religion does not differ

differ from theirs in any point fundamental, or necessary to salvation. Secondly, They teach, that the scripture cannot be shewed to be clear in points not fo fully necessary for falvation. Hence, I argue thus, in points wholly necessary to falvation you and we all agree, as you fay; fo that by this you can infer no more, than, that the scripture is clear in those points in which we both agree. What get you by this? Do you feparate from the whole church for other points, which you cannot prove yourselves, by this ground, to have clear scripture for? It is your common doctrine, delivered by Dr. Fern, in his Sect. 13. that against public authority (especially of all churches, in the whole world, all which you opposed in very many important points) there must be brought evident demonstrations of clear scripture. You do not prove, that you bring this, unless you can prove the scripture universally to be clear in points not necessary to salvation; for about these (as you say) we only differ. If you please to fay then, though scripture be not clear in all points unnecessary, yet it is clear in those in which we now difagree; every child will fee, that you beg that very thing which is in question. And what argument will you bring, to make us believe, that the best, and the choicest doctors that were in any church, for these last thousand and two or three hundred years, could not fee the true sense of a clear, plain, and evident text of scripture which they read every day? And yet, you must increase the miracle, and say, that all those doctors of that age, in which first the true religion decayed, must needs know, that the whole former church, from Christ's days to their days, had understood those clear places just as you understand them now; that is, in their true fense.

f

V

2

e1

10

ti

W

qu

yo

13

the

Fen

thi

tur

Bu

all

sense. Now, I pray, upon what record have you it related, that there did fall in the sourth, or sixth age, such a thick mist upon all the best seeing eyes of that unhappy age, (about which age also none of you can agree) that no one doctor could, or would see himself to proceed against the known sense of all former christianity, in the interpretation of those texts, which so evidently stand for the doctrine of all former christianity against them? Will you have us to believe this strangest wonder of all wonders, without any record from antiquity, only upon your saying, that it was so?

7. There is yet another convincing reason, why this clearness you speak of in scriptures, to unfold unto us the undoubted sense of the Holy Ghost in all necessary controversies, comes to be of no fervice, for the infallible finding out the true fense by every private man and woman; to all which you use still to say, If you will be with us, you shall see what you do; We require your obedience to what we demonstrate to be God's will for you to believe and do, as Dr. Fern boasts, Sect. 14. Here we come to the point to see your demonstration; if you gull us here you undo us: Make us then see, that by clear demonstration of scripture. we may see what God in all necessary points requires of us to believe and to do; and make all of us, men and women, do this. How vastly you deceive us I have shewed already, Sect. 2. N. 13. which place I must needs intreat the reader to turn to, and read attentively, before he goes further. There we have shewed (and that by Dr. Fern's own confession in his Sect. 26.) that all things necessary are not contained expresly in scripture; but some of them are only thence deducible. But tell me (great doctor) be they deducible by all of us, whom you promife fo gloriously to make

d

of

t,

11

e

ne

ir

ou

ue

se.

make eye-witnesses of this demonstration? They be (faith he) deducible not all by every one that reads; but it is enough if done by the pastors and guides, which God appointed in his church to this purpose. What? did you call us all to be blindfolded by you, and not to fee the demonstration: but to hear only this news of it, that it has been feen to be a demonstrable deduction by your ministers? We do not see your demonstration, but your gross cheat. Yet (my dear brother) thou shalt see thyself gulled far more. Every minister has not eyes (how wilt thou know whether thy minister has or no?) to see this demonstrative deduction; for Dr. Fern addeth, That they must be ministers, using the means that are needful (mark the word needful) for that purpose, such as is: 1. Attention. 2. Diligence in the search of the Scripture. 3. Collation of places. 4. Observing the connexions. 5. Sincerity and impartiality in the collection or deduction they make. 6. Prayer and devotion for affistance in the work. Also, befides these fix rules, there be fourteen more to be added; as I shewed in the place above cited; of which, some be as impossible for the vulgar multitude to use (though this multitude make up the number of the believers) as it is for them to be cunning in Greek and Hebrew; for they (to know they have interpreted the scripture right) must of necessity be cunning in both these languages. Neither do I say any more in this, than your own most learned doctors have said before me; to which I add your most learned Wbitaker, Lib. de Sacra Script. P. 5. 23. where he fays of those, who understand not the Hebrew and Greek. That they do often err, and that unavoidably: Sæpe ac necessario ballucinantur. Now bid us poor people come with you, and we shall see what we do. Now, indeed, we see what we do; for we clearly see

t

fi

W

th

lib

inf

lib

th

OW

fer

fur

we do we know not what; because we see we leave, by your instruction, the interpretations of all councils, and fathers, seconded by the perpetual practice of all churches, which God had upon the face of the earth, for twelve hundred years together, as is confessed: And this we do, to follow, not this evidence, which we are told we should see with our own eyes to be such; but to follow what some ministers say they see to be evident, to wit, those few ministers, who are perfeetly skilled in Greek and Hebrew; of whose perfect skill we have no knowledge of our own; and though we had, we do not perfectly know that they have used in all points they teach us, these twenty rules which they confess to be needful: And we also do know that all these twenty rules are confessed to be fallible; and we have little hope by twenty fallible means, to come to fee an infallible truth established; for when we were boys at fehool, learning a little arithmetic, we were taught, that naught times naught did make nothing but naught.

Mille licet Cyphris Cyphrarum millia jungas, Nil præter Magnum conficies Nibilum.

To nothing join ten thousand nothings more: Thou shalt find nothing but of nothing's store.

V

n

0 le

at

ac le

V,

ee

ve

Add not only twenty, but twenty thousand fallible rules: You shall be never the nearer that infallible truth, by being so well provided of fallibilities.

8. I have (I hope) shewed thee sufficiently, that thou canst not see assuredly, and upon thy own knowledge know evidently, which is the true sense of the scripture. Now I will give thee a surther reason thereof, delivered by one of thy

G 3

own chief doctors, Doctor Jeremy Taylor, in bis discourse of the liberty of prophecying, Sect. 3. where he proves the uncertainty of arguments deduced (as Dr. Fern speaks) from scripture, by the many senses of scripture, when the grammatical fense is found out. For, there is in very many scriptures a double sense, a literal and a spiritual; and both thefe fenfes are subdivided: For the literal sense is either natural, or figurative; and the spiritual sometimes allegorical, sometimes tropological; sometimes there are divers literal senses in the same places: So he. Now it depends upon the fecret intention of the Holy Ghost, to have used these words in some one, or two, or more of these fenses. How shall we find out so great a secret, and that so infallibly, as to be undoubtedly affured of our own knowledge, that we have certainly discovered this secret? Twenty fallible rules, though we should use them all, as well as a man could, would not bring us to this infallible affurance. Even your great doctors (who have used them better than thou canst hope to do) have had two bundred several opinions about the true sense of these four words, This is my body. Thou thinkest thyself to be affured infallibly, upon thy own knowledge, that these words be to be interpreted figuratively; because thou hast conferred this text with fome other texts; for example, with these texts which tell thee that Christ's words be spirit and life, and that the flesh profiteth nothing. Alas, thou hast observed but one of these twenty rules, which is, conference of one text with another. This rule is infinitely deceitful, as the same Dr. Taylor teacheth thee, who in his next fection faith; Another great pretence (to justify new interpretations) is the conference of places; A thing of such indefinite capacity,

1-

-

e

d

d

d

n

d

u

d

-

of

.

2-

pacity, that, if there be ambiguity of words, variety of senses, alteration of circumstances, or difference of stile amongst divine writers, there is nothing which may be more abused by wilful people, or may more easily deceive the unwary, or that may amuse the most intelligent observers. What shall then become of thee and me, who are none of the most intelligent observers? And so this rule alone leaves us at a non plus, even though we had both Greek and Hebrew: For (as the fame doctor intimates) it is a most pitiful argument to infer; this must infallibly be the true sense, because I can shew that perbaps it may be the true sense. Again, when your doctors bid me confer this text with other texts of the bible: I ask, whether I must confer it only with other places of the same book in which it is written? They will fay, no; but I must confer it with all other texts of the word of God, written in any book. First, This is a vast labour, and requires a vast memory to do it, as it should be done, with exquisite attention. Secondly, I have a question to ask, which I am sure will pose you, how shall I, or any doctor of them all, confer this text with the texts of all other books of scripture, feeing that no fewer than some twenty books of scripture have quite perished, and be no where to be found in the whole world? As I shewed, Sect. 1. N. 7. Thirdly, You say that by this conferring of places, what was obfcure proves clear: And you mark not, that by the very fame means, what was clear grows obscure. What more clear than what St. Paul said; If you be circumcifed, Christ will profit you nothing. Gal. 5. Take this so clear a text, and confer it with that, Act. 16. 3. He took Timothy, and circumcifed bim; and you will find difficulty how the former text can stand in full force. Do you think G 4 month but to St.

St. Paul would make Christ profit Timothy no-

h

n

d

P

n

F

21

it

m

th

fa

th

th

pla

ot

w

m

ev

ob

If

ble

ha

ry

the

the

and

nei

gre

COD

SeE

me:

thing.

o. Hence I infer, that if God had intended the Scripture for our fole and only rule of faith, he would have fet down in some one place all neceslary points clearly, and diffinctly; and he would not have left these points to be picked out, one out of one book, another out of another, no man directly knows where: Yea, no man knows by feripture, which points are necessary even for himfelf or for all. Had God intended to make a book our only judge or rule, he would have given us fuch a book, as should clearly and distinctly have laid; Thefe points are necessary to be believed, thefe things are necessary to be done. But now, one man tells us one thing is necessary, another man fays no: The scripture says neither yea nor no. Therefore, to those who will follow scripture only, no affurance at all can be had of the necessity of such points as the scripture does not affirm to be neceltary: For if you have only human reason for This necessity, this is but a human motive, which is deceitful; and being thwarted with a contrary reason of as apparent probability, my faith now is turned into a doubt. The points which are neceffary, you commonly fay to be but few; and that the scripture sets them down clearly, as it does also set down clearly many other points not necessary. Whence the vast number of those not necessary points clearly set down doth infinitely increase the difficulty of finding out these few which are necessary: Seeing that they lye so featter'd and intermingled in the numberless number of the not necessary. For some of these neceffary points are fet down here, in the beginning of the bible; fome one, fome two or three books after; fome other hard by that, fome other a huge way off; and so from Gen. to the Apoc. Yea, why

not further than the Apoc. for it is a meer guess made at random, to conjecture that in those twenty books of scripture, which be quite loft, no one necessary point should be fet down plainly, which is not fet down plainly in these books which we have. At least you say this without scripture: and therefore by your own principles, you should not fay it: For your part being affirmative, (affire ming that no one, necessary point was plainly fet down in those books which be lost, which is not plainly fet down in these which we have ;) youmust prove what you say, and that by scripture: For I am fure you cannot prove it by traditon : and therefore neither in your, nor our principles. it can be proved. Again; the bible, as it is now. makes a book fo big, that the far greater part of the world, taken up with fo many necessary affairs, cannot in a very long space of time read over this book fo often, and fo exactly carry away all the clear texts thereof, as to be able to confer one place with another: For before they come to the other, which is perhaps in the Apocalyps, that text, which they did read in Geness, is out of their mind: Or if that text be not, some other may be, even at a time in which they should have most observed it. Besides this, what am I the nearer if I spend all this labour in my english translated bible; of the right translation of which I neither have, nor can have full affurance, if I be not a very great scholar; as has been shew'd Seel. 4. Yea. tho' I be fo great that one among one hundred thousand is not greater; (for I understand greek and hebrew most skilfully:) Yet, for all this, I neither have, nor can have full affurance, that the greek and hebrew copies which I use, be the true copies of the true word of God; as has been shew'd Section 5. God's wisdom directs him to the best means, to compass his intention: We even in our G .5 ordinary

yearaban

ordinary wisdom, if we intend to set forth a book, which should end all necessery controversies, would all do our best endeavour to comprise in half a dozen chapters at the most all these few fundamental points; for these points you teach to be but few: And we would not make those poor fouls (which we dearly loved) at the peril of their own damnation, to feek out, all the whole bible over, these few points which are confessed not to be so easy to be found out, but by some choice ministers observing all that long way, which is from the first of Genefis to the very last Verse of the Apocalyps, no fewer than twenty rules, and many of them very hard ones to observe at all times, in all passages of fo long a journey. And yet there is, to the full, as great reason, why those twenty books more, which are loft, as all these which we now have, should be consulted: Being God gave us all the whole written word for our guide. God did not proceed thus even in the old law in points of far, and incomparable far less concernment; to wit in points of meer ceremony: For every little particular ceremony which he exacted, is with most minute exactness fet down in the compass of not many leaves: Yet far fewer would contain all points necessary to falvation, if they be so few as you hold.

10. We then, by our own judgment, are not able to deduce demonstratively all those truths and verities which are wholly necessary to our falvation: But instead of doing this by our own selves, and upon our own knowledge, with demonstrative Teentity; we are in plain terms, told by the best protestant doctors, that this cannot be done by us, even in all these necessary points; no, nor done by all our ministers, without the use of many rules, which the far greater part of them cannot ule. What then shall we do? Which way shall we turn with headily a VF the with home at all the

2

t 9

2

0

£

-

27

t

h

e

0

0

f

S

3

f

-

0

ot

d

S,

e

ft

5,

16

5,

e.

m

11

our felves? Is there no better way, than to trust those choice, but still fallible ministers, using still only falible rules, and infallibly fure to contradict one another? I will tell thee first, what thy own protestant prime masters in scripture do plainly tell thee, I mean, those renowned doctors, who now, at this very time, are fetting forth that fo famous. bible, of so many learn'd languages. These doctors, perusing night and day, the best original copies of the bible that be to be had, may as fafely be followed by thee, as any ministers thou knowest. These men in the preface to their great work which I cited, Sea. 4. N. 8. having first endeavour'd to clear that controverse about the truth of the copies of Gods true Word which they give us; they then speak thus, The whole controversie being about the true sense of the scripture, deliver'd by translations every where received, we have ready at hand the judgment almost of that whole church which is catholic (or universal) as well in respect of its being in all places, as its being in all times; which church unfoldeth to us the places in controverse. To whose Judgment (mark this) be who will not fubmit bimself, truly be seweth bimself to be a man of no judgment, and be is scarce worth the name of a man, much less of a Christian. So they, fol. 4. This is. a different lesson from what Dr. Fern taught thee. But it has better authority, catholic antiquity being-altogether of one mind in this point. I will tell the this out of a most approved Doctor of the primitive church, and no man does fo much as question whether the words which I shall cite out of him be his or no; he has but one little book in all: It is Vincentius Lirinenfis, who lived in the fifth age; he writes thus, Do Heretics use the teftimonies of scripture? Yes indeed, do they, and that most vebemently; you shall fee them fly through all the facred books, the books of Moles, the books of

Kings, the Pfalms, the Apostles, the Gospels, the Prophets: And this whether they be among their own people, or others; both privately or publicly; both in their discourses and in their books; both in banquets, and in the Streets; they scarce ever speak one word of their own which they do not fet forth with the words of the scripture. Read but the works of Paulus Samosatenus, of Priscilianus, Eunomius, Jovinianus, and Juch like pestiferous fellows, you shall see infinite beaps of examples, and scarce one fide of a leaf, which is not painted out with fentences of the new and and old testament. And a little after, when now they shall begin, not only to bring forth, but also to expound, and not only to cast out, but also to interpret those words, then prophane novelties are laid open, then you may fee the bedges cut down, and those limits transferr'd which our Fathers did put us; then you may fee the doctrine of the church torn in pieces, &c. And by and by, But Some one will say, what shall catholics do, and the Jons of the church? By what means shall they distinguisto the truth contain'd in scriptures from the falfity of their interpretations; They must exceedingly apply their care to interpret the divine canon of Scripture, according to to the Traditions of the universal church, and the rules of the catholic doctrine; which practice I said in the beginning of this book was deliver'd down unto us by boly and learned men. So he. And the place which he cited out of the beginning of his book, is admirable to our prefent discourse; for having put the very objection which our advertaries use to make; That seeing the conon of the scripture is perfect, and superabundantly Inflicient in all respects; what need is there that the authority of the churches interpretation should be join'd to it? Then he answers; because for footb all men do not in one and the felf same sense take the facred scripture by reason of the great depth thereof. One

1

1

1

I

t

k

fe

One man expounds it one way, one man another way; insomuch, that as many senses may seem to be deducible from it, as there be men. For Novatianus expounds it one way, Photinus another, Donatus another, Arius, Eunomius, Macedonius another; Apollinaris and Priscillianus, Jovinianus and Pelagius another; Lastly, Celestious and Nestorius another. And therefore, multum necesse est, It is very much necessary to avoid fo great and fo manifold labyrinths of error, that the line, by which we rule out the interpretation of the Prophets and Apostles, be directed acording to the rules of the church and the catholic fense. So he; fo I: fay thou also so; and all our divisions will be ended; for then we should not, under presence of feeing with our own eyes what we do, take the scripture contrary to so many councils, and all authority of church-tradition; because we judge it ought to be expounded fo in our private judgment, the differing from all churches upon the face of the earth. But I must have a church, upon whose authority we all securely may and also must rely, in interpreting the scriptures, as St. Vincent speaks; and that church must of necessity be granted to be infallible; but no church can be infallible which has not this condition, that it holds and teacheth it felf to be infallible; as I shall demonstrate, Sect. 17. N. 2. which condition agreeing to no one church but the Roman (as is manifest,) this Holy Father, and all the rest (who bid us still in doubts and controversies about the scriptures, and their feveral interpretations rely upon the church, and take her doctrine for our warrant) do bid us rely upon that church which was held and truly held by all to be infallible. And so all very well know, that they meant the Roman Church, and no church differing in communion from her; because this condition agreed to none but her. When this was to undiffurtably out of all question, among all such as were then counted catholics, then they 39:15:4 thought

le

he

11

re

f.

thought it enough to fay, Rely on the church; without faying, Rely on the Roman Church. So we catholics, fpeak to this very day, never adding the Roman, but for our adversaries fake among whom we live; just as english-men say, The Parliament decided such a thing; meaning the Parliament of England; which all english in England perfectly understand without adding any other words: But the english (who live among french-men) when in France they fay, The Parliament decrees fuch a thing; they must of necessity add, the Parliament of England, to be rightly understood of the french-men there; who otherwife might think they meant some French Parliaments. Those who have made themselves of a different communion from Rome, will not now in these days understand that pure old catholic language still common to all us of the Roman Communion: The church decreed this; Follow the interpretation of the church; rely on the interpretation of the church, &c. when we express ourselves thus by this word Church, without adding the word Roman, we are known, by all who be of the true Church, only to mean the Roman Church, and those of her Communion: Yet even we in these strange new times to be understood by these outlandish (as I may say) and newfound people of our days, must needs add the word Roman; or else they will not understand us to fpeak of that church, of which we are by all our own church most perfectly understood to speak And antiquity by the name of the Church, still meant the Roman Church, just as we do; and just as we fpeak among our felves, fo then fpoke the boly grave Fathers, whose catholic language was nothig understood by that foreigner, who, more boldly than advisedly, said, that none of the ancient christians believed the Church of Rome to be a guide or judge of all controverses in christianity, because Tertulian Vincentius Liringules and others giving cules 12:00:21

1

ti

tı

m

to B

rules to know Heretics, forgot this main and clearest Rule: Whereas you fee by the words I have cited that Vincentius Lirinensis tells you as clearly as I do, that to avoid Herefie you must, in understanding the scripture, follow the interpretation of the church, as a secure guide and interpreter in all controversies arising about the sense of scriptures, shewing it a note of Heresie to do the contrary. The very felf same is told you by all those Fathers whom I shall cite Seel. 21. Numb. 2, 3, 4. There is then no more mystery in faying that those ancient Fathers, being Members of the Roman Church, did by the name of the church mean that Roman Church of which they were Members, tho' they added not the name of Roman; then there is in the ordinary speech of every man in England, when, by the name of the Parliament, he means only to fignifie the English Parliament; tho' he adds not the word English; and yet that acute Universityman will not understand this so vulgar language.

Sect. 8.

A twelfth argument. Divers other necessary points not contained in, or decided by scripture.

0

3

11:

C.

11.

ft

-

ns.

de

M.

and none of them all contained in scripture, I will add divers more. The creed of St. Atbanasius has ever been admitted by all succeeding true believers, and your English church does profes to believe it, and used to read it in their common prayer. In this creed you profess yourselves to believe several points no where contained in the Bible in plain terms: As that God the Father is not begotten; that God the son is not made, but begotten by his Father only; that the Holy Ghost is neither made nor begotten, but does proceed, and that from

the Father and the Son; And that, he who will be faved, must believe this. For this is an article of that catholic faith, which faith without a man holds entirely and inviolably, without all doubt be shall perifb eternally. All this is in that creed professed by us; and yet not one of those several points contained in it, can be shewed to be contained in scripture, no not for the substance of them in any fuch texts as clearly decide the matter. Note by the way, how you plainly contradict yourselves, who subscribe to the truth of all that has been faid of the necessity that there is to salvation, to believe all the foresaid particulars here expressed by St. Athanafius: And yet you will needs hold the Greek church for a true church, which holds flatly against St. Athanasius in this article, though the bolding of it entirely be necessary to falvation.

2. To this point (for I let all these several points pass for only one) I might add, that in the same book of common-prayer you in another creed believe, that Christis of one substance with the Father, and that the Holy Ghoft proceeds from the Father and the Son: For which words the Grecian church holds us all hereticks; and yet your doctors of the English church will needs hold them a true church. But that which I press is, that we are bound to give an infallible affent to this article of God the Son's being of one Substance with the Father; But you, who will give no infallible affent to any thing but Gods written word, cannot possibly give infallible affent to this article, which is no where clearly fet down in scripture, but an Arian cobler will easily put off all the texts you can bring; as I newed S. T. N. S. But not to fland contesting about the clearness of these texts, let this point pals joined to the former.

3. For another point not contained in scripture, I bring the baptifm of children, which is wholly ne-

ceffary

t

(

fa

m

ce

for

Bu

tio

chi

far

cor

tha

evi

alm

tex

Of

that

Fern

VOIC

a fig

cifio

ther

cessary to the salvation of children. The learned Layman lays L. 5. Tra. 2. C. 6. nu. 11. that it has been by fome observed that the third part of mankind died before the feventh year of their age be ended. The third part then of mankind is concerned in this one point, of giving lawful baptism to them when they are children; and yet, a point fo necessary to the salvation of many, is no where plainly fet down in scripture. To this Dr. Fern answers, S. 24. Baptism of children, as to the practice of it, is not contained expresty in scripture; (id est) it is no where commanded to be done, or faid that they did do it: But the ground and necessity of it are sufficiently delivered in scripture; and that is enough for the doing of it. And that the arguments from feripture, by Bellarmin and others alledged, do sufficiently shew. Furthermore concerning Bellarmin, the doctor tells us, that he (Lib. de Bapti smo c. 8.) faith, That the arguments for childrens baptism out of Scripture cannot be avoided; and that it is a thing evident in scripture. But yet faith (Dr. Fern) when he treats of traditions (L. 4. de Verbo Dei, Cap. 4.) This thing of childrens baptism must be one of them, that is necesfary and not contained in scripture. This is not ingenuous nor conscionable. So Dr. Fern, but far less conscionably: For Bellarmin, L. 7. de Bapt. in all that Eighth chapter has no word in favour of the evidence of scripture for baptism of children: Yea. almost at every text that he cites, he shews, that text to have no force out of our adversaries mouth. Of one argument out of scripture, he says indeed, that, as it cometh from us, (which words Dr. Fern conceals) it is so manifest that it cannot be avoided; and that is, that circumcifion was fo clear a figure of baptism, that St. Paul called it circumcision: But circumcission was given to infants, therefore baptism may. But here Bellarmin may well

a

0

li

C

b

bo

fh

th

pr

yo

or

cb

A

en

Wi

ve

CO

ch

904

and

Ta

nev

wa.

well mean, that this argument, as it comes from us, cannot be eluded; to wit, by that usual shift, by which the Anabaptifts can easily elude it when it comes from Lutherans and Calvinists; whom Bellarmin had shewed to teach, that the form of baptism was only a sermon, which agrees not to infants: This evasion cannot any way elude this argument as it comes from us. This is all can be convinced out of this place of Bellarmin. But there be other folid ways of avoiding all force of this argument, even as it comes from us. For first, every facrament must not be received by all those, by whom the figure of that sacrament might lawfully be taken; finners did lawfully eat manna, but they cannot lawfully receive the Eucharift; of which manna was a figure: So also circumcifion was necessary for the Male-children of the Fews only, and that not before the eighth day; and baptism is now necessary both for the male and female children of all nations in the world, and that before either the eighth, or fecond day, if there be danger of death: the confequence then holds not from the figure to the thing figured. Neither is that a necessary consequence which is drawn from baptifing of whole families. For first, as we read, that whole families were baptized, so we read that whole families believed. Himself believed and bis whole Family, 70.4. v. 53. Will you evidently infer from hence, that the little children, not yet of years of discretion, did believe? They then only believed who were capable: So will Anabaptists say, they only were baptised in these families, who were capable of first believing, and answering for themselves. condly, In many families all the children which are alive, are above seven years old, and of age to believe: There be many families of new married people, who, as yet have no children; or those they

n

n

0

\$

e

t

of

1

it.

it

1-

0

of

h

e

e

g

ce

S.

re

e.

4.

at

11,

re

re

of

e-

ch

to ied

ole

they had be dead: Many are barren, and will never have any. Now Mr. Doctor, as these two chief places (brought by Bellarmin, or others) do afford you no clear principle, from which you can evidently deduce the necessity of infants baptism, or that it is good and valid, and not to be iterated; or that their parents are obliged to procure it for their little children; fo other less strong places will less help you to the evident inference of any of these points, which you hold necessarily to be believed. I am not satisfied by being told other men cite texts which do prove this evidently: You must cite them, and shew them to be evident. The best text, beside these, is this, Except a man be born of water and the spirit, be cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven, Jo. 3. 5. but how many shifts the Anabaptists have to avoid the force of this text Bellarmin tells you; and you shall see one presently.

4. Much more ingenuous and conscionable is your Dr. Taylor in his defence of episcopacy, S. 9. P. 100. where he faith, Baptism of infants is of ordinary necessity to all that ever cried; and yet the church bas founded this rite upon the Tradition of the apostles. And wife men do easily observe, that the Anabaptists can, by the same probability of Scripture enforce a necessity of communicating infants upon us, as we do of baptifing, upon them. For as we press them with that text, Except a man be born of water and the spirit be cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven: So they press us for the necessity of infants communion, by the text which follows but three chapters after the former: Verily verily I fay unto you, except you eat of the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink bis blood, you have no life in you. Dr. Taylor adds, And sherefore a great Master of Geneva, in a book be writ against the Anabaptists, was forced to fly to apostolical, traditive ordinati-

on. Here is the very thing ingenuously confessed which we labour to prove; that we must trust the churches tradition for this point; the necessity of which is fo great, that he adds, They that deny this, are by the just Anathema of the Catholic Church, confidently condemned for beretics The Pelagians were ever accounted heretics, even in this respect, that they (as St. Austin witnesseth, Heref. 88.) taught, Although infants be not baptized, they shall poffess an eternal and bleffed life; the' it be out of the kingdom of God. Those Protestants are far bolder, who admit them even into the kingdom of heaven itself. The doctrine of the ancient Fathers is fo manifestly against this doctrine, that Calvin himself says, (Inflit. Lib. 4. C. 15. N. 20.) It was usual many ages since, even almost from the beginning of the church, that in danger of death, Lay-people might baptize. So he, And to fay the contrary, were to cross all antiquity; as your Billon confesseth in his conference at Hampton-court. Hooker faith no less in his fifth Book of Eccl. Policy 62. For, as your Mufculus confesseth, The fathers denied falvation to the shildren who died without baptism, though their parents were faithful. So he, in Locistit. de Baptismo.

f

ti

11

tu fa

go

le

tu

po

fai

vei

hav

hol

flin

gro

ver

this

and

5. To these I might add the Milevetan council, in which St. Austin was present and subscribed, and in which (Can. 2.) it is defined, That subspected denies children newly born to be baptized, or say, they contrast nothing of Sin from Adam, which may be cleanfed by the lawer of regeneration: Anathema. But that which I chiefly insist on, is, that the fathers profess to believe the necessity of baptism for infants upon tradition. So that here Dr. Fern will see a point necessary to falvation to come down to us by unwritten tradition; which he stiffy denies, Sect. 24. Origen, who lived just upon the second age swhich age knew best the tradition of

d

e

of

te

e

n

١,

1-

n

of

13

77

in

e,

1;

at

th

115

be

4

10.

il,

nd

er

17,

27

10.

2-

of

TA.

ne

AY

he

of

the

the first age) writes thus, Cap. 6. Epistola ad Ro-The church from the Apostles has received the tradition to give baptism even to little ones. And the great St. Auftin is witness of the continuance of this tradition in his age; as also, that this point ought not to be believed at all, but upon tradition: (Note his words, Mr. Doctor, they be these,) The custom of our Mother, the church, in baptising little ones, is not to be contemned: Neither is it by any means to be reputed superfluous: Neither ought it to be believed at all, without it were an atostolical tradition, Lib. 10. de Gen. ad lit. C. 22. Note that he esteems the belief of this necessity to so weakly grounded in scripture, that it ought not at all to be believed without it came down to us by tradition. And again (contra Crescon. Lib. 1. C. 33.) speaking of this point, he saith, That nothing for certain can be alledged out of canonical scriptures in this point: Yet in this point, the truth of scriptures (and confequently a fufficient ground for faith) is kept by us, when we do that which feemed good to the catholic church; which church the authority of the same Scriptures does commend. Now joyn this place to these places which I have alledged in the last Sea. N. 1. to shew that the scripture did bid us still follow the church; and you will fee manifestly that we may, and, in this point, must ground our faith upon what we have only from the church; or elfe we can have no faith at all of this necessity of baptis.n, as our advertaries have none at all of it: For scripture they have not, and the tradition of the church they hold no fufficient ground of faith; which St. Auflin in this necessary point takes for the chief ground of his faith: And again (Lib. 4. C. 24. adversus Donat. de baptism Parvulorum) speaking of this point, That which the universal church bolds, and was not inflituted by councils, but yet always beld

beld, is most rightly believe to be delivered down to us by no other than Apostolical Authority. If apostolical authority be not a sure ground for belief, upon what ground have we received all our writings as divine? This authority secured St. Austin in the belief of a necessary point not contained in scripture. The like authority may also as well secure us all in those other necessary points, which we have shew-

ed to be contained in no scripture.

6. What I have faid will be much confirmed by another necessary point, which also is not contained in any scripture. It is a damnable herefy to affirm, That those who are baptized by heretics, ought to be baptized again. This controverfy was moved in the days of St. Cyprian; and he was a man as able to fee that which was clearly fet down in scripture, as any of you all: Yet, as appears by his first book of epistles (Ep. 6.) and other places, he did really judge the scripture to teach, that all those were to be rebaptized, who had been baptized by heretics. On this ground he held that opinion. And for the same opinion, faith Vincentius Lirinensis, there stood so great force of wit, such torrents of eloquence, so great a number of patrons, so great appearance of truth, so many oracles of scripture, though misinterpreted. How come they to be overthrown? He tells you a little before, Then pope Stephen of bleffed memory, the bishop of the apostolic see, together with his fellaw bishops, yet more than any other, did refist them; esteeming it, as I think, a worthy thing, if be did surpass all the rest in devotion of faith, as be surpassed them in the authority of his place. In fine, in that Epistle of bis, which was sent into Africia, be decreed with thefe words: That nothing ought to be innovated; but that to be retained which was delivered down to us. Hence, faith this holy Father, the end of the business was, that, Antiquity

tı

ck

te

t

n

-

d

1-

to

S,

T-

nd

ly

as

0-

to

10

nd

n,

at

t a

So

ed.

1 a

ry,

el-

fift

if

as

In

A-

ning

hich

roly

nti-

uity

quity kept possession. And he adds, strange change of things. The authors of the self same opinion are judged catholicks, and their followers beretics. The masters of it are absolved, and the disciples condemned. So he: For it was not a necessary point of belief, before the church had declared this opinion to be contrary to true faith, because it was contrary to tradition; now in a council examined by the church, and found to be full and strong enough to affure us of the apostles authority in this point. And so St. Cyprian and others did hold the contrary opinion, and were not heretics: But all those who, after this declaration, opposed this tradition thus examined, and proved for Apostolical, were, for that very opposition of such a tradition adjudged heretics. Neither were they before adjudged to be heretics for their oppoling the scripture as clear in that point. No fuch thing was ever fo much as objected against them. Hence that great African doctor St. Austin, speaking of this very point of rebaptization, writes thus, De unitate Eccl. c. 22 This is neither openly nor evidently read (in Scripture) either by you or by me: Yet if there were any wife man, of whom our Saviour had given testimony, and that be should be consulted in this question; we sould make no doubt (Mark this all you who oppose the infallibility of the church) to perform what be should say; lest we should seem not so mu b to gain say bim, as to gain say Christ, by whose testimony be was recommended. Now Christ bears witness to his church. Mark also this reason, and confer it with all those testimonies given by scripture to the church which I cited the last Sect. N. 1. and then mark St. Austins consequence, which is, Whosoever refuseth to follow the practice of the church, does resist our Saviour himself who by his testimony commends the church. Go now, and tell St. Austin that seeing neither he nor you could find this

this point in scripture, therefore it is not necessary to hold with the church in this point, for which the hath only tradition: You shall see if he will not again tell you, as clearly as I do, that as you should oppose Christ himself, if you refused to obey some one man, whom Christ should bid you obey in points of belief; And you should not so much disobey the man, as you should disobey Christ authorifing this Man; so being that Christ bids you obey the church, you should not so much disobey the church, in refusing to obey her in points of faith, as you should disobey Christ who authorized the church, and invested her with this power in the

texts cited Sect. 7. N. I.

7. Here agin St. Austin de Baptismo contra Donatistas, Lib. 15. C. 23 The Apostles (in scripture) bave prescribed nothing concerning this thing; (the point I speak of) but this custom, which was oppfite to St. Cyprian, ought to be believed to bave taken its origen from their tradition. As there are many things (note that he speaks in a matter necessary to be belived) which the universal church observes; and for that reason (O excellent reason!) are rightly believed to bave been commanded by the Apostles, altho' they are not found in their writings. Give me leave here to ask; whether it be not damnable, to refuse the observation of that which, upon so good a reafon, (as is the testimony of the universal church,) is rightly believed to have been commanded by the Apostles: Sure I am that you cannot have the thousand part of so good a testimony, that such a one is your Father; no, nor that such an one is your mother: And yet it is damnable to refuse to obey them. Tell me then, tell me; I say, tell me, why should it not be much more damnable, to refuse obedience in a point (for example, the fall of lent) which the univerfal church testifies, that

3

P

al

th

ch

ture

it is rightly believ'd to have been commanded by the Apostles? Whence Mr. Cartwright in his second reply against Whitg. par. 1. Saith. If St. Austin's juagment be a good judgment, then there be some things commanded of God, which are not in the scriptures. Whitakers and Reynolds words speak much to that effect. See also St. Austin Lib. 2. contra Donat. C. 7. and my Sect. 21. N. 5.

8. Here I might shew, out of most evident texts of holy fathers, that the Apostles did make the fast of Lent a matter of precept; and consequently the breach of it to be damnable, and the observance of it necessary to salvation. See St. Leo Serm. 6. Serm. 9. St. Ambrofe Serm. 25. Serm. 34. Serm. 36. St. Hier, Epift. 54. St. Auftin fully Serm. 62. And fee him presently against Aerius. Alfo that those are judged Heretics by the church, and called Quarta-decimani, who would needs observe Easter on the fourteenth of the moon, tho' it were not funday: Yet no clear scripture was against them; but they were against the church. So for the same reason Aerius is lifted for an Heretic: and one of his herefies is related by St. Austin (in his book of Herefie, 53.) to be this: He taught private opinions of bis own, Saying; That we must not pray or offer for the dead; and that the solemnly approved falts were not to be kept; that every man was to fast when be pleased; that be might not seem to be under the law. Were not these heresies good protestant doctrine? So is that which follows; If at all I will fast, I will choose any day of my self; and I will fast that day to shew my liberty; Saith the same Heretic in St. Epiphan. his catalogue. (Har. 72.) I might also add, that St. A. ftin, in the same book (Hær. 84.) put down for heretics, the Helvidians, for affirming that the Virgin Mary had other children after the birth of our Saviour: And there is no clear text of scripture against them. Yea St. ferom sweats hard to answer all the texts of scrip-

ly

re se

2-

by

he

ch

ne

rse

tell

, to

falt

hat it

ture which Helvidius brought: See his Book against that heretic: Whofe heretical followers St. Epiphanius in his catalogue calls Antidicomaritas. I might also add several such points; as to communicate fasting; and but once in the day; and fuch like points wholly necessary for our observance; and whose transgression is damnable: yet, to be liberal, I will take all these last points specified in this number, only for one. Now, for the peoples fake, who are most capable of that point, I will add one more in a fection apart; and so will make the former nineteen points to be just two dozen, by the addition of these four points explicated in this fection, and of that other point which follows. I shall add also another Sect. 16. N. 2. And yet another Sect. 20. N. 4. And yet another Sect. 21. N. 5.

smalle stand blow Sect. g.

A thirteenth argument. A four and twentieth necessary point not contained in scripture.

A LL things, say you, which are necessary either to be believed or done, for obtaining salvation, are clearly put down in scripture: I now, by a four and twentieth instance, shew this to be salse. That is necessarily to be done to salvation, which lest undone causeth damnation; but the observation of the Sunday, (commanding the abstaining from all servile works) if neglected, or lest undone, brings damnation; therefore to observe in this manner the Sunday, is a thing necessary to salvation. And yet this point is so far from being clearly put down in scripture, that, standing merely to the sole judgment of scripture, we can shew far clearer texts for still observing the Saturday, than for the lawfulness of working upon that day, and the unlawfulness of working upon the Sunday: For neither of these

te

it

ne cle

afd

have so much as one clear text; but the still keeping of the Saturday (for all those who hold Scripture the only rule of faith and necessary practices) has many texts, wholly unanswerable; if this main controversy between us and the Sabbatharians be to be tried by Scripture as the only judge. And it is impossible for you, by scripture only, to convince the Ethiopians, who are said to observe both the Saturday and the Sunday; grounding themselves also in the Apocryphal Recognitions of St. Clement, Lib. 7. C. 24. where the Saturday is commanded to be kept, as well as the Sunday.

See Bellar. Lib. de Scrip. in Clem.

y

1-

e:

W

to

n;

ng a-

to

ing

15

re,

t of Aill

s of

s of

hele have

2. It is superfluous to cite the many texts, by which God commanded rest from all work upon the Saturday, which was the feventh day, because it was the day on which our Lord rested. And it was not any one day in feven, but the feventh day, of which (and not of any other among the feven days) it is faid; And God bleffed the feventh day. and fanctified it; because in that (and not in any other) be bad refted from all bis work. Gen. z. How comes this bleffing given to no other day among the feven, but given to the feventh day only, to be loft? Who took away the fanctification of it, given by God himself; and given for a reafon, which is as obliging now as ever? Give me a text, which tells us (and that clearly) that this sanctification was ever taken away. If you contend, that a new fanctification was given to the Sunday, because our Saviour did rest that day; let it be so, to the honour of his holy name: But where do you read, that, at the giving of this new fan ctification (for which also you have no clear text) the former fanctification given to the feventh day, on which God rested, was taken away from that day? Again, the day of our Saviours ascension to Heaven was upon the Tbursday, and H 2

15017

that may, exceeding properly, be called the final period of all his actions: What clear text of Scripture tells you, that any particular fanctification was given to the Sunday in honour of our Saviours refurrection, more than was given to the Thurf-

day in the honour of his ascension?

3. But standing to the new Scripture only, I will shew that we have stronger texts, resting in the strength of the text only, (as you will have us,) for still fanctifying the seventh day or Saturday, than for Sunday. I will give you text for text; and let any reasonable man judge, whether the text be not more clear for Saturday, than for Sunday. I have in the Revelations, that St. John was in the spirit upon our Lords day, that is Sunday. What then? Is every day to be sanctified, by abstaining all the world over from all work, because St. Fobn had a revelation on that day; as also he had on many other days? O but hence it is clear that there was fuch a day as our Lords day; so it is. But how do you prove from hence, that the fanctification given to Saturday, was taken from that day? Or that there was given a command to all the world, not to work upon that day which was called our Lords day? How prove you that by Scripture only; or that it was not the day of the Refurrection, or Ascension, or Christimas-day which St. John called our Lords day? Now give us as good an answer (if you can) to the text I shall bring for still keeping the Saturday. We are still obliged to keep all those commandments which our Saviour did bid us keep with his own mouth; but he did with his own mouth bid us keep the whole decalogue, or those ten commandments given to Moses, in the very sense which the Jews understood them; Who did understand, that by Remembering to Sanctify the Sabbath-day, they were obliged to fanctify the Saturday. I prove what I have faid out of the 10. of St. Matt. where we read that one came to our Saviour faying; What good shall I do, that I may have everlasting life? Our Saviour answered; If thou wilt enter into Life, keep the commandments. And when that man replied to know what commandments our Saviour meant? our dear Lord did clearly explicate himself, to mean all the commandments of the Decalogue given to Moses; those very commandments which this man knew very well, as appears also by Mark 10. Luke 18. You fee here the very author of our new law, with his own mouth, requiring no less the keeping of this commandment, as necessary for our entrance into life everlatting, than the keeping of any other commandment.

4. Give me your fecond text for the Sunday, and I will return a more clear one for the Saturday. Your best text is Act. 20. v. 7. And upon the first day of the week, when the Disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow. Hence (will you fay) it appears, that the first christians were accustomed to communicate upon the first day of the week, which was Sunday. I answer first. That it is not clear out of the text that they used to do fo, but that they did fo that particular Sunday, of which a very-good reason may be be given out of the words following, telling us, that St. Paul was ready to depart on the morrow. Wherefore those first fervent christians might all assemble themselves to communicate at the hands of fo great an Apostle before his departure, and they being affembled, the zealous St. Paul made them a fermon; but you have no where that he preached every Sunday. But I have a clear text for his preaching every Saturday; For he disputed

H 3

n

to

h

Dy

he

lay

ve

1

Ne ents

wn

bid

om-

enle

un-

tur-

in the Synagogue every Sabbath, and be exhorted the Tews and the Greeks, Act. 18. Again, no wonder they affembled to communicate that day before St, Pauls departure, because they were used then to communicate every day, as many doctors fay, or wonderful frequently, as is strongly gathered by that text, Act. 2. 46. And they continued daily (mark the word daily) with one accord in the temple, breaking bread from bouse to bouse. Thirdly. How does their communicating upon Sunday take away the fanctification which God himself gave to the seventh day, setting that day apart from all servile work? again, do you think they never worked on that day of their communion, who communicated daily or exceeding frequently? is their communicating once upon a Sunday enough to prove, that all the world must never more work on the Sunday? And that, from that day, it shall be ever lawful to work on the Saturday? is such a text clear enough to abolish a precept clearly confirmed by the mouth of the author of the new law? my second text for still keening Saturday. is far clearer, out of 1 Cor. 7. 19. Circumcifion is nothing, and prepuce is nothing, but the observation of the commandments of God; that is the thing we must now look after, if we will have life everlasting. Behold here that great apossie of the new law does tell us, that even then when circumcifion was quite abolished and made nothing, yet the obfervation of the commandments (of which the fanctifying the seventh day, or Saturday, was one) did still stand good, and in its full observance; so that now we have our Saviour himfelf, and three of the four Evangelists, and St. Paul for the obfervation of the seventh day, as much as for the keeping of the other commandments.

5. Let us hear your last text, for you have but three. It is I Cor. 16. Now concerning the collections for the Saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye upon the first day of the week; (that is, Sunday) let every one of you lay by bim in store as God bath prospered bim, that there be no gathering when I come. A very weak place to abolish an old known and still observed commandment, confirmed by Christ's mouth; and to bring in a new obligation upon all the world for ever. For I pray mark, that it is not so much as faid, that these monies were to be gathered when the people did meet at the church upon Sundays: But, Let every one lay up by bimself in store; for which work some one day of the week was to be appointed; St. Paul thought fit to appoint the first day for a pious beginning. But how will you deduce from hence by evident consequence (as you must) that he gave them leave to work the day before, and obliged them, and all others not to work that day, until the worlds end? neither this, nor any other place can be brought out of the whole bible, from which this contequence can be evidently inferred. And now comes my turn, to give you a third and far more evident text, for the still fanctifying the Sabbath or seventh day; for my text shall shew, that standing to Scripture only, the feventh day was of command to be observed long after St. Paul did fay those words, and long after the practice of communicating upon Sundays was in the church. My text is Mat. 24. v. 20. But pray you that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day. Hence our Saviour foretels clearly the destruction of Ferusalem (which was to happen in the year of our Lord 73.) that is forty years after the refurrection of Christ. Then, if ever, a man would think the command for the observation of the sabbath, or feventh H 4

a

1

0

IS

h

k

11

h

ly

W

19

0-

071

SI

A-

w

Gon

ob-

the

ne)

fo

ree

ob-

the

Let

feventh day, to have been abolished, so that it could not be prophaned; and yet our Saviour did bid his Apostles, (for to them he spoke these words;) Pray that this flight might not be upon the Sabbath or feventh day, to avoid the profanation of that day; on which indeed Ferufalem was taken, and pillaged. And there was, besides a perpetual maffacring, a perpetual pillaging, and carrying their goods to places of fecurity, as also a perpetual flight of those Jews which could fly, and carry away their goods if they could, or endeavouring to carry them or sweating with inceffant labour to hide them, by which action the profanation might feem to be committed. Therefore all the places alledged before hand do not convince, that the obligation of not prophaning the Sabbath-day was taken away; as also they convince no new obligation of not working upon the Sunday to be brought in. For both these things I ask for Scripture, and nothing but Scripture; for it is nothing to our purpose to bring reasons, why the Sabbath might be taken away; and this obligation of not working upon the Sunday might be introduced: but you who affirm not the possibility only of the fact, but the real fact of abolishing Saturday, and of instituting Sunday, you, I fay, must prove both these things with clear texts, or elfe your mere discourfes and reasonings will not be half so good arguments as our constant tradion of the church, which you absolutely deny to deliver down to us any neceffary obligation, not clearly expressed in Scripture. Your own doctor Taylor, in his defence of episcopacy, p. 100. confesses the plain truth. For that (fays he, speaking of the keeping of the Sunday) in the New Testament we have no precept, and nothing but the example of the primitive disciples; At Geneva they were once about changing Sundays feast into a Thursday, to shew their christian liberty. dinava)

t

ti

e

no

15

un

de

W

Up

ty. So he. Had the contrary been plainly fet down, your so illuminated brethren of Geneva should have seen it. Give methen infallible texts, and not fallible discourses, concerning the abrogating of the Saturday, and institution of the Sunday

feast in place of it.

le

r-

uch

e-

p-

For

un-

and

les;

ays.

berty.

6. But I have a new difficulty in this matter, which is objected by no body that I know of, because it is not very obvious. My difficulty is this; That we are bound under pain of damnation to keep our Sunday in a manner not only not expreffed in any clear Scripture, but also against the usual manner of keeping the Sabbath, and all feftival days, expressed in clear Scripture. For, according to clear Scripture, we are to begin the Sabbath or feast on the evening before, and to end it the next evening; as is clear out of the twenty third chapter of Leviticus, where all the old Sabbaths and feasts, and the manner of keeping them. are put down; From evening to evening shall you celebrate your Sabbaths. It was then forbidden, under pain of damnation, to work on Friday after the evening; infomuch that a taylor, shoemaker, weaver, &c. who should have continued working. for any long time between Sun-set and twelve a clock at night, should have been damned for his labour: and yet at the next evening he might lawfully have worked until midnight: But I hope there is no such thing held lawful on Sunday after the evening; neither is it unlawful to do any, though never fo laborious work, upon Saturday evening, until midnight. Here then you have another obligation, under pain of damnation, which is not plainly put down in Scripture, but delivered unto us by the tradition of the same church, which delivers the obligation of fasting in Lent unto us. Wherefore none of you all can shew any ground upon which any obligation of keeping the Sunday; H 5

and keeping of it in this manner (which I now specified) can be grounded solidly; but upon the very self-same ground we will as solidly ground the obligation of keeping Lent with a fast of precept (as I shewed seet. 8. n. 8.) as much as Sunday is a feast of precept. This argument will trouble Dr. Fern, who, seet. 13. most inconsequently to his other principles, holds the obligation of keeping the Lord's day, made plainly known unto us by tradition only: And yet holds, That in the Scripture only all necessary obligations are set down plainly. Plain contradiction.

Se&t. 10.

A fourteenth argument. By the texts which our adversaries bring to prove, that Scripture contains and decides all necessary controversies, we prove the contrary.

A LL of you fay, That all things which are 1 1 necessary to be believed or done for obtaining falvation, are clearly put down in Scripture: therefore if it be necessary to our salvation to believe Scripture to be by itself alone our only rule of faith, or to hold, that by itself alone it decides all necessary controversies, the Scripture must also be Thewed by you clearly to contain and determine all this: for elfe you press us to hold that which no clear Scripture bids us to hold; which thing you all account unreasonable in us. Your part is here affirmative; and in this prime point you contradict the practice of all the church: against so great and so publick authority, you must bring the evidence of clear Scripture, according to your own principles. If we then can but shew, that all the texts you bring do not suffice to this evidence, you are condemn'd even by your own principles. Let us then

H

to

po th then hear your texts, and that out of Dr. Fern, for

he hath the chief of them.

e of

111

be

all

no

ou

ere

ra-

eat

the

wn

you et us

then

2. The first text which is brought by Dr. Fern. labouring in his feel. 23. to fatisfy my doubt, is this; For in them (the Scriptures) ye think ye bave Salvation, John, 5. v 39. I pray mark what I fay, and you shall see how weak this and other fuch like arguments are. In the seventeenth verse of this chapter begins a discourse of our Saviour's to the Jews; and when he comes to the thirty fourth verfe, he fays, Thefe things I fay unto you, that you may be faved. Now my answer is this: That which our Saviour said unto them that they might be faved, is a stronger proof, that that alone by itself was sufficient to salvation, without any thing else; than to say, The Jews did think by fuch a thing to have Salvation; therefore that thing by itself alone does (without doing any more) suffice to falvation. For undoubtedly our Saviour's saying such a thing, is better than the Jews thinking fuch a thing. This supposed, would you not count him mad who should fay, that those precedent verses, which our Saviour had then said when he spoke these words, These things I say unto you that you may be saved, did contain alone a clear expression of all particular necessary points, diffinctly putting them all, down? How then does it follow, that because the Tews did think (and perhaps truly think) to find that, which might fave them in the Scripture, therefore the Scripture did contain alone a clear expression of all particular necesfary points, diffinctly putting them all down? Wherefore, as you must not understand that thort speech made by our Saviour to have sufficed to Salvation, by expressing distinctly all particular points necessary; but because it did suffice to bring them to the knowledge of the true Messiah, whom they

they acknowledging, might, by his particular instruction, know distinctly all particular necessary points: so the Scripture did suffice to salvation, by expressing clearly enough that Fesus Christ was the true Saviour of the world; whom they could not but believe, if they would believe Moses: For bad ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for be wrote of me, faith our Lord in the same chapter, v. 46. Believing then our Saviour, they should from him (and his church after him) receive full instruction in every particular necessary point. But Dr. Fern urgeth this place wonderful weakly; Because (saith he) they might know all things necessary to salvation (by Scripture only,) therefore he bids them fearch the Scripture, and they should find they testified of bim. A weak confequence, to prove that they might know all neceffary points out of Scripture, because they might know this one point of our Saviour's being the true Messiah. For it is no consequence, This one point is clear in scripture; therefore all other necessary points are clear in Scripture. My second answer is, Go and fearch the Scriptures now, and you shall find falvation in them; for they will clearly fend you to the church for your particular instruction in all points necessary, as I shewed feel. 7. n. 1. Thirdly Search the Scriptures, and you stall find falvation in them; but not in them as expounded by every man for himself (for these very men found not salvation by them, as they understood them;) but you shall find Salvation by them as expounded by the publick interpretation of the church And as it is no consequence, Christ did bid the Jews search those Scriptures which they had then, because in them they should find clearly put down that one point of his being the Messias; therefore those Scriptures, and all the

CHILDREN CHEST OF THE CONTROL

a

do tr:

or th

ye.

ing

the New Testament (of which no one word was then written) are affirmed by Christ to contain all points now necessary, and to put all down clearly: so also it is no consequence, Christ bid us search the Scriptures; therefore we are to attend to them alone, and not to attend also to the voice of his heavenly Father, bidding us bear bim; nor to the voice of Christ himself, testifying of himself; nor to the voice of his miracles, which he calls a testimony greater than John. Nor are we to attend to the voice of John, although he was fent on purpose to bear witness of the Light, fo. 1. 7, 8. And yet all these consequences be as good as this your consequence, Christ bids us search the Scriptures, therefore we must attend to them alone, and take them alone to be of sufficient authority to ground faith in all points necessary, and not attend to the I will give you a consequence, though most bad, yet to the full as good as this: St. Paul faith, If women will learn any thing, let them ask their busbands at bome, (1 Cor. 14. 35.) Therefore women are to attend only to what their husbands teach them at home, and not to go to the church to be instructed in points necessary by the minister. But after all this, I must tell you (Mr. Doctor) for a fourth answer, That you asfume that which it is impossible for any of us all to prove; that is, that our Saviour did bid them fearch the Scriptures. St. John did write in Greek. and the Greek word (Ereunate) as also the Latin (Scrutamini) does as commonly and as properly fignify You do fearch (in the indicative mood,) as do fearch (in the imperative:) and therefore the translator of your bible might, according to the original, as well have put it, not as he did, but thus; You do fearch the Scriptures, because ye think ye have Salvation in them; of which notwithstanding they did miss with all their search. If we read

e

2-

d.

nd

ill

ar

A.

vou

efe

hey

att-

ore-

nce,

ures

ould

eing

d all

the

read (as we may) You do fearch, then this place evidently proves, that the fearch of the Scriptures only doth not suffice to salvation: and therefore it is as probable (to the very full) that this text makes against you, as that it makes for you. And this interpretation of mine is not only the interpretation of St. Cyril Lib. 3. in Jo. c. 4. but also your learned Beza faith; I do affent to Cyril expressly admonishing that these words (Ereunate) &c. ought rather to be taken in the indicative mood, You do fearch the Scriptures. How often have Protestants heard us give this unavoidable answer; and yet they, being never able to answer it, will never give over the citing of it, as if it were a main proof of this fundamental point of their religion? An evident fign of their want of evident texts. Again, the knowledge of the only rule of faith is necessary for all: But Christ did not bid all common people fearch the Scriptures; for at that time the Scriptures were not in the Syriac language at all; which only language the people of the Fews could underfland. See this proved fect. 2. N. 11.

3. Dr. Ferns second text is; They (the Scriptures) are able to make wife unto salvation. He presseth it thus; Can that be faid to be able to make a man wife to fuch a purpofe and only do in part, and imperfectly, teaching bim only some knowledges to that purpose? Also he saith after, v. 17. The mon of God is thoroughly furnished, or perfected to every good work. I answer, that the short speech which our Saviour made, intending it (as I shewed in the former objection) to make those wife to falvation; was truly able to do what he intended, and that perfectly; or elfe he had miffed in the choice of a means sufficient to that end, which he clearly faid he intended; to wit, that they might be faved. you cannot fay, that speech, by irself alone, sufficed to make them wife to falvation; but it did in able 25537

ce

es

It

xt

nd

e-

ur

d-

ht

do

nts

ret

ve

of

VI-

IR,

ary

ple

1p-

er-

rip-

He

rake

and

s to

man

very

nich

the

1071;

that

of a

faid

Yet

fuf-

din-

able

able them with fufficient principles, by following of which, falvation might be effectually obtained; and so that speech was able, not in part and imperfectly only, to work the effect, by giving some knowledge to that purpose; but that very knowledge which that short speech gave, was a knowledge effectual for the direction of all those Tews; not by directing them in every particular, but by telling them clearly whence all particular directions were to be had, which any one following will foon prove a man of God perfect, throughly furnished to all good works. Is not all this true even of that fhort speech? Much more is it true of so many speeches made to us in Scripture for our salvation, and able to bring us effectually to it, if we follow them, especially such speeches as bid us so often to follow the church. See the many places I cited S. 7. N. 1. These Scriptures then so full of these speeches, and these divine writings expounded, not by private, but by public exposition of the church, do not in part only and imperfectly, work this effect, by teaching us some knowledges to that effect; but they teach us a great fum of fuch knowledges, as are able to effect the work, though not by giving us every particular point to be done, but by telling us whence every particular point might fecurely be had. Yet to give you fuller fatisfaction; I fay, it was far from St. Pauls mind to fay the Scriptures are able to make us wife to falvation, as they are used by those, who take them as interpreted according to that fense, that every man shall in his conscience judge to be true. The Scripture thus taken, breed's infinite inconveniencies, as I shewed at large feet. 7. Whence appears that the Scriptures used so, are the cause of many mens damnation. St. Paul then did not speak of the Scriptures taken fo (as you do;) but he faid, They were able to make Timothy wife to falvation; becaule

because he was i deed a man of God who did continue in the things which be learned and had been affured of; to wit, by the oral tradition of the doctors of the church, and by St. Paul himself: For fo St. Paul teacheth me in the beginning of his former chapter, faying to Timothy, Thou therefore (my Son) be strong in the grace, that is in Christ Jesus, and in the things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses. And in the chapter before that v. 13. Hold fast the form of found words which thou bast beard of me Yea, and in this third chapter, But thou bast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, &c. All this doctrine he could not have known by any Scripture, of which a fmall part was then written. Give me then a Timothy, a man so well preinstructed by tradition, fo fast a holder of traditions, and a man so knowing from whom he had learned these things; and I will freely allow you, that the Scriptures will make such a man wife to salvation: For he will be fure to take them, not upon any private mans judgment, or upon his own; but to take them as interpreted by the church, whom he will be fure never to contradict; the being the pillar and ground of truth, as that his great master faith, All whose doctrine he fully knew. But those Scriptures which are able to make such a man of God, such a Timothy, wife to salvation, and thoroughly furnished or perfected to every good work, are not able to do this effect, if used in a manner contrary to that which I have shewed they were used by him, and should be used by us. We do abule them if we take them and discapon them fas I may fay) by our private interpretations, contrary to the tradition, and unanimous exposition of the church. These men use Scriptures to their perdition as St. Peter faid some did the hard places of St. Pauls epistles: whence you see that misinterpretations the Calling

an

far

oth

ten

Mr

pretations of bard places were made to the perdition of the interpreters. Wonder not then to hear us fay that the obscurity of some places of Scripture have occasioned the perdition of the false interpreters of those places, out of which state of perdition some guide there must be who can lead them securely: Can you find me a surer than the church? There is no want of infallibility in Scripture, but there is great abundance of fallibility in our private judgment of discretion, which makes us need a

fure guide in the interpretation thereof.

e

h

2

n,

V-

nd

ill

be

ns

m

ill

lar

ter

But

nan

and

rk,

ner

ere

do

em

onr

tion

beir

aces

tions

4. Having now shewed in what sense the text alledged did fay, The Scripture was able to make a man wife to falvation; I shall easily shew how weakly from these words St. Paul is said to have ment, That the Scripture by itself alone was Sufficient for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works. I then freely grant the Scripture sufficient for all this, but still in the same sense that I have explicated the Scripture to be able to make a man wife to salvation; to wit, as interpreted by the church, or as understood by men well preinstructed by tradition, who will be fure in all doubts to have recourse to the church; and esteem as much what tradition teacheth the Apostles to have said, as what their books teach them to have written: Their words being of the same authority unwritten as written; and tradition being a more uncorrupt deliverer of their doctrine, than writing; which is subject to be so many ways corrupted, and altered, and of which we are only certified that it is Apostolical by the tradition of the self lame church, which does as well certify us that other doctrines be Apostolical, besides those written in this book. Here also I must tell you how Mr. Fisher did excellently silence Dr. White, when

in their public conference he urged, this text, The Scriptures is profitable, &c. For, said he, Although wood be profitable to make the substance of a bouse, to make wainscot, stools, tables, and other furniture; yet bence does not follow wood alone is sufficient to build and surnish a bouse: so Scripture is profitable for all those ends, but alone is not sufficient. Whence all the weight of your argument comes to this; that if it be so profitable as to make a man wise to salvation, it must be sufficient by itself alone to do so: which I have already shewed to be salse; without you take the whole canon of Scripture as interpreted by the Holy Church, or as understood by those who are preinstructed by traditions, as Timothy was.

5. Indeed you fay, this sufficiency belongs to the whole Scripture, though in proportion only to every book; and therefore the Apostle said, That Scriptures are able to make a man wife to falvation. How they are able to do this, I have shewed; But Mr. Doctor, of what Scriptures did St. Paul fay these words? if he did not say these words of the whole Canon of the Scriptures which we now have, and to which you stretch these words; this place cannot possibly prove that this sufficiency belongs to the whole Scripture we now have: but it is evident he did not speak these words of the whole Canon of the Scripture which we now have; for almost all the new Scripture was as then not written. How could that, which was not at all, have a being then able to make Timothy wife to falvation? St. Paul spoke of the sufficiency (if you please) of all Scriptures which were then extant. You deny this sufficiency to them, and you say: It belongs to the whole Scripture, though in proportion to every book: therefore it belonged in proportion only to those books which were written then. Why did St. Paul then fay of those books then ex-

th

te

as

je

la

fin

tui

tant,

tant, that they were able to make a man wife to falvation? Now answer your own argument. Again, if every book of Scripture contributes its proportionable part, to make up a whole body of books compleatly sufficient to this purpose; how will you do now, when no fewer than twenty books of the Scripture are quite loft, as I have shewed feet. 1. N. 7? We have not any thing like a text, by which we can prove that thefe twenty books were not as requifite to make up this full fufficiency of the whole Canon, to decide all controversies, as any other twenty which we have; especially, if you except the four Gospels. And yet the original of one of these Gospels is also quite loft; and we have no furer ground for that belief, by which we believe our felves to have the true copy of it, than the tradition of the church; if she be fallible in her traditions, we cannot believe any thing in St. Matthew's Gospel as I shewed, feet.

6. Whereas you object, that, though the Scripture did contain more things blainly in itself, and shew us from whence we may have the rest, that is, from the church: Yet thus the Scripture could not be Said to make us perfect, for so the law might be said to make us perfect, because it sheweth us Christ, and was a schoolmaster to bim, Gal. 3. And John Baptist might have been said to have perfected his Disciples by shewing them Christ. So you. I answer, that you all fight against this objection with every text you bring in this controversy against us: for as the two former, so all the following texts objected against us, speak of the Old Testament, or law,; for in that (Christ said) the Jews thought to find falvation; of that he faid, fearch the Scriptures; of that St. Paul said, it was able to make a man wife to falvation, it was profitable, so that by

It

1,

U

ıt.

r-

1-

n. xnt,

it the man of God is throughly furnished or perfected, mark that word) to every good work. And now, behold you yourself come and infer for an absurdity, that the old Scripture should be able to do this. We freely acknowledge that the law of itself could perfect no man, no nor justify any man, as St. Paul clearly faith in the place cited; but they were all to be justified by faith in Christ. The law, as introducing to this, did sufficiently perfect all those, who were perfect under the law; independently of this, it did not do fo. As for St. John, you are clearly told by St. Luke C. 1. v. 13. that he was sent Parare Domino plebem perfectam, to prepare to our Lord a perfect people: And towards the end of that chapter, Thou child shalt be called the prophet of the bighest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins. Can you shew the Scripture doth more in this point than it faith St. John did?

7. Your third text is, You shall not add to the word which I speak unto you, nor take from it. Deut. 4. 2. Therefore the Scripture is so perfect, and fo fufficient, that it alone contains all necesfaries; and therefore condemns the superadded traditions You have forgot, Mr. Doctor, your very last words, That the law (chiefly contained in Deuteronomy) could not make us perfect: And now you bring these words as words implying the perfection and fufficiency of it; for of it alone these words are spoken. Secondly, you have forgot your very first words of this your 23. Sect. where you put three forts of tradition that you allow there, and fed. 13. Be not these additions to the written word? thirdly, you have forgot, that the Jews had at least two undeniable traditions, besides those which delivered the Scriptures, and the true · fense sense of the Scriptures unto them: For they knew only by tradition, what remedy was to be used to free their female-children from original fin; as also, to free their male-children in danger of death before the eighth day. This remedy they knew and observed, and were bound to know and obferve. And yet they infallibly knew it without having any Scripture expressing to them the knowledge of this remedy, or of their obligation to use it; or that it was so necessary for the salvation of their children, whom they did believe to be in original fin, and by that debarred from falvation, unless some remedy were applied. Some remedy furely was as necessary for the female, as circumcision for the male: shew me this remedy in Scripture. Secondly, They truly believed some of those bloody facrifices to have been appointed unto them by God, for the expiation of their fins; but they could not truly believe, that any of those Sacrifices could expiate their fins by its own virtue: they believed then, that those facrifices had this expiative virtue from the merits of Christ: shew me any text in which this was then written. It is ridiculous to fay, that this faith was not necesfary to that church, at least, so as to be believed by fome among them. Fourtbly, Mr. Doctor, you forget against whom you bring this testimony: if it belongs only to the Yews; why do you bring it against christians? if it belongs also to christians; why do you not circumcife yourselves? you urge against us, ye shall not add: we urge against you, ye shall not diminish. Fiftbly. Mr. Doctor, you forget that you are to conclude thus; The whole Canon of Scripture is a sufficient direction for us: and you conclude, that the law of Moses is a sufficient direction for us; which you and yours confess to be false. Sixthly, you forget that a whole score of books are diminished from the

1

n

S

y

ıt

d

n

US

es

le

the Canon by being quite loft; half a fcore more you will take from us, and cast amongst the Apocrypba, Do you think that no part of this fufficiency is wanting to fuch a Canon as you now have? give me your text for that. Seventbly, you forget, that it is impossible for you to prove, that the Scriptures must be taken either as they found, or taken by every man in that fense that he in his own conscience judgeth. Give us the Scriptures taken in the fense which the visible church judgeth (for the indge of the fense must be visible,) and we will grant all. For then without any addition, and by only true interpretation, we will prove, that we must take the church for our infallible guide; and the will thew us Scripture rightly by her interpreted, for the admitting of unwritten tradition. In the middle of this your feven fold forgetfulness I pray remember what pitiful texts you have put in the forefront, to prove that, which, if not proved better, your religion would prove most pitifully grounded. The fense of the words which you urge is literally this; Let no man presume by his private interpretations to deprave any law, either by restraining, or stretching the natural fignification of the words in which it is delivered. For example, God in Deuteronomy 17, v. 11, 12. faith, Thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they (that is the high priests) shall show thee, to the Right-hand nor to the left. And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not bearken unto the Priest, even that man shall die. God would not have this law depraved by such an interpretation as you use to give, that the Sentence is to be followed of those judges which God appointed to tell you what was Gods law rightly understood, if they give fentence according to Scripture, as you would have it expounded. 1. Your 8. Your

m

te

Bu

Bu

Spe

Go for:

8. Your fourth text out of the end of the Revelations is incomparably weaker, and it evidently damneth your father Luther and Lutheran brethren unto hell; for St. John testifies to every man that heareth the words of the prophely of this book (he speaks of the Revelations only:) if any man shall add unto thefe things, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophefy, God shall take his part out of the book of life, and out of the Holy City. But Luther took away all the words of the book of this prophely. when he faid in his first Preface to the New Testament, that be received this book, neither for prophetical nor Apostolical: therefore God shall take bis part out of the book of life, and out of the Holy City. The same shall be done to his Lutheran Disciples. Thus you see I have concluded evidently what I faid, let us hear you conclude; nothing must be added to this book, therefore all the Scripture is sufficient to decide all controversies; though twenty whole books of it be loft, and though you take all the texts of the whole Canon in that fense which every man in his conscience thinks best: thus in effect you conclude. Note also, that there is no kind of certainty that the Apocalyps was the last book of Scripture; for you own Kemnitius holds St. John's gospel written after that; and most hold his Epistles the very last part of Scripture. mark, that the very last verses, which were written in his last Epistle are, I bad many things to write (now when all the Scripture was written:) But I will not with ink and pen write unto thee. But I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall Speak face to face. Peace be to thee. Now for Gods sake, what text affures you (for all other affurances we by your own principles reject;) what

re

11

be

ot

m

1-

ell

if

ou

ur

text (I say) affures you, that those things which St. John bad yet to write, but did express them by mouth only, were all of them things unnecessa-

ry.

9. Your fifth text, Gal 1. 8. Though we or an Angel from Heaven preach another gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you; let bim be accurred. As I faid before, fo I fay now again; if any man preach another gofpel unto you, than that we have received, let bim be accurfed. First, Mr. Doctor you forget, that in the beginning and in other parts of your book, you will have our church to be one and the fame with yours in such fundamentals as constitute a church: and will you now prove this church, by the fentence of the apoltle to have been accurfed, anathematized, and excommunicated, or cut off from the true church? you must sweat to find Goda true church upon Earth, if ours flood excommunicated by St. Paul ever fince it held traditions. Secondly, you forget that you bring this curse upon your own head, for it is you who preach another Gospel from that which St. Paul preached, and that which we received from him, to fland fof and hold the tradions which we have learned, whether by word or Epiftle, 2 Thef. 2. 15. And fure we are that the Epiffles to the Thesalonians did not contain the whole Gospel: if they did, then find in those Epistles, that you must take the Scripture only for your rule in all poits of faith, and all other necessary points. It is also the doctrine of St. Paul, the things which thou ball beard of me before many witnesses, the same commend thou unto faithful men, which fall be fit is teach others also, 2. Tim. 2. 2. You will have us commend to other men, not those things which were only beard before many witnesses by public tradition,

ti

7

Ř

ti

ar

m

16

be

fir

ly,

St.

G

the

all

wh

our

brei

Felu

king

Wh

tradition, but only fuch as are written: you therefore gainfay St. Paul, and on you the curse of his excommunication falls. Where you fee, by the way, a good reason, why we could not hold you in our communion, you being anathamatized by St. Paul himself. We then, conformably to the doctrine of St. Paul, fay that the Gospel which he preached unto them, and the Gospel which they had received (fee his first Epistle to them Cap. 1. and 2.) was a Gospel, which is most truly expounded by us to contain both his unwritten and written doctrine; yet in all probability very little of the Gospel had been, as then, delivered in writing unto the Galatians; or tell me how much if you can? fure I am, that besides what was written, they were yet to receive much more in writing: yea the furest opinion is, that the first thing that ever St. Paul did write was the very Epistle to the Galatians, as is well proved by the Remish Testament in the preface of the Epistle to the Romans. And you can bring nothing but conjectures to affirm that he had delivered at this time any written Gospel at all unto them. Again you most unskilfully fay, that this text must be meant of the written Gospel only, for that which is written bears (you mean only) the name of Gospel; for first, this very place proves the contrary. Secondly, Many other places shew the contrary, for in St. Matthew c. 4. v. 23. Jesus went about all Galilee preaching the Gospel; what Gospel was then written? and c. 9. v. 35. Jefus went about all the cities and villages preaching the Gofpel; what gofpel was then written? or written when our Saviour faid; Where foever this Gofpel shall be preached, c. 26. v. 13, St. Mark, c. 1. v. 14. fefus came into Galilee preaching the Gostel of the kingdom, faying, Repent and believe the Gofpel. What written Gospel did they know? or St. Peter,

.

m

11-

e-

on

ner

ind

falt

be-

ure

did

hen

the

aith,

the

ball

com-

fit to

ve us

which

iblics

ition,

to whom in the 10th. chapter Christ speaks about leaving goods for the Gospel. And thus, I might run over the new Testament, where the word Gospel is so often taken for the doctrine delivered by word of mouth; and perhaps not thrice in all Scripture it is clearly taken for the written Gofpel. And also to Evangelize is far more frequently takes for preaching the unwritten word, than the written. This text then most convincingly proves that St. Paul commands them by no means to go against the doctrine received by tradition. As for St. Austin's authority, with which you back your interpretation, Bellarmin told you truly, that he did not expound this text, but did only cite it to prove that nothing was to be believed against Scripture: no nor besides Scripture interpreted truly by the public authority of the church, as I faid before: and this answer fatisfies what you bring out of St. Ferom; although indeed he speaks of those who bring not known and publick tradition of the church; but of those who devise new things, and give them out for old traditions, which not being true traditions delivered by the church, must needs be of no authority, without they can prove their truth by Scripture, which they cannot prove by true tradition.

go

pr

Pa

ne

leas

wh

St.

gun

one

to G

add

fon

any

Weal

the judgment of St. Augustine and St. Jerom. It is enough to incur the Anathema, if they teach any thing of faith besides that which is received from Scripture, in the sense you take this word besides. It is also impossible to shew that St. Paul there spoke of scripture. Yea he speaks of that which they bad received from bim, who never writ any thing before that Epistle, as I said; neither do we teach any thing of faith besides that which hath authority from the scripture, though not from the scripture expounded as private men think sittest, but

but from scripture rightly expounded by the church, to which we add nothing but what scripture bids us add. Wherefore the authorities you cite are ill applied to us, for we speak nothing without authority and testimony of the scripture taken in this manner, as it should ever be, neither add we any thing what is not written; for it is written, bold ye the traditions. If you say this is no true tradition. I am by scripture bid to hear the church before you. Note, that it is a very good argument to fay, it is no where written. therefore it is not to be admitted; if this argument be only used as the fathers use it, that is, when it was notorious that fuch a thing was not delivered by tradition; for what is not delivered by church tradition, must be proved by scripture. See S. 12. N 6. You see what little need we have to interpret the words, besides what I have preached, to be the same, as if he had said, contrary to what I preached. Yet because this is very true, it is justified by Bellarmin; and you, not going about to answer so much as one of the proofs, deferve no answer, Yet mark what St. Paul fays, Rom. 16. I defire you bretbren to mark them who make diffentions and scandals (note the next word) contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them. Who are contrary to what was delivered to the Roman church, to which St. Paul did write these words? Who be they? mark them, avoid them.

u

KS

i-

W

15,

he

out

ich

in

It

ach

ved

rord

Paul

that

Writ

er do

hath

n the

tteft,

but

gument drawn from this text, to mans testament no one adds, Gal. 3 15. Much less is it lawful to add to Gods testament, say you We answer, that we add nothing to God's testament: but with all reason we still stand to have it interpreted, not by any mans pivate authority. For what commonwealth permits the testaments and last wills of man

to be so interpreted? let us have God's testament both new and old, interpreted by that publick authority impowered by Gods commission to this end, and we require no more. Less than this cannot in reason be required: so that your jest of a will partly written, partly nuncupatory, is loft, No wills worfe made than those which concern many intricate matters belonging to very feveral persons, and yet prohibiting any court in the world to interpret them, but do let the fense be judged by every one concerned in it. Infomuch that though Christ, in four several places of his will, clearly tells us, that he leaves us the ineftimable legacy of his precious body and blood, and that his flesh is truly meat, &c. yet by private interpretations it shall be lawful to tell us, that we must have only a figure and Sign of his Body. Would any Man admit of the Figure or Picture of a Horse or House, in place of a Horse or House given him by legacy; shall there be no court in the World to prevent these inconveniences? thus you would have Christ make his testament. Who has so little discourse, as to think a testament, lest to no courts interpretation in the world, to bea fit judge, by its own evidence, when twenty or thirty leafs can be prov'd to be missing unto it? and yet to the whole testament, new and old, twenty whole books be missing, as I have prov'd Sect. 1. n. 7. and half a score more be most unjustly pull'd out of the canon by you, and cast among the apocrypha. And yet you would have all of us stake our fouls upon the full affurance we have, that this broken testament, taken thus and also taken as it is expounded by you, against fathers, councils, and the constant judgment of the greater fort of the present christian world, and the known judgment of all the christian world for a thousand years together. What more unreasonable

0

bo

th

to

ho

the

able? with mans testament none deals thus, much

less with Gods.

r-

ıft

ld

1

ise

in

nus

ho

elt

ne a

10 1

it?

old,

ov'd

un-

calt

have

e we

s and

ft fa-

f the

d the

for a

able!

12. I must needs also put you in mind, that you are much mistaken when you fay, that the word testament signifies only a written testament : for our faviour in his last supper said, this is the blood of the New Testament, Mattb. 26. 28. Mark 14. 24. and again, this cup is the New Testament in my blood, which (Cup) is shed for you. Here we have the New Testament made by unwritten words, eight years before one word of it was written, and well towards eighty years before all of it was written to the end. Having then shewed, that the words Gospel and New Testament, according to scripture, do most properly signify the unwritten word of Christ; we may confidently say, that we add nothing to the gospel of Christ, or the New Testament. If you ask, how I know what was delivered by Christs unwritten gospel and New Testament? I easily answer; I know this by the testimony of the self-same always visible church, by whose testimony you know that such books contain Christs written gospel, and written New Testament. I know this by the tradition of the fame church, by which only all christians did know it for those seventy or eighty years which passed between the passion of Christ, and the finishing his written gospel or New Testament. I know this by a better testimony than all the world knew the articles necessary to falvation, before any one word of scripture was written, which time contains above two thousand years: for if the tradition of that church, in the law of nature, were sufficient to ground the infallible affurance of all the articles believed by that church for two thousand years, I hope the tradition of the church, which is now in the law of grace, is yet a more strong ground to I 3 affure

assure me of that unwritten doctrine of Christ delivered far more publickly by him and his apostles, than that unwritten word of God was delivered in the law of nature to some few patriarchs, in a manner very private, in comparison of Christs unwritten doctrine, as shall be said Sect. 16. n. 2.

13. Your fixth and last Text here objected is our Saviour's speech, Matth. 15. taken from Isa. 29. 13. Their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men. Whence you infer, that all things of wor-Ship or faith necessary to salvation, which are not commanded or written, are to be condemned. Before I return answer, give me leave to tell you whose language you speak, when you deliver this your own doctrine. St. Austin (contra Maximum, lib. 1.) brings in his Arian heretic speaking thus to the catholics: if you bring any thing from the scripture, it is necessary that we bear it : but these words which be besides scripture, are in no case received of us, seeing our Lord does admonish us, saying, in vain they worship me, teaching the commandments of men. So that heretic. Just so you and yours. I answer, first, that many things may be commanded by God, and yet not written, and fo be the precepts not of men, but of God, though we be affured of them by men. For all precepts which were for those two thousand years and more, concerning worship or faith, necessary in those ages to salvation, before the first scriptures were written, were truly the precepts and doctrine of God, and as such to be observed; though this obligation was notified only by the men of that church. For example: the fall of Adam, and the promise made of our future redemption, was notified by Adam's children, who delivered the same to their children, and so downwards. So we read, Gen. 9. that God said to Noah and his sons, that it was not permitted

n

-

T

15

ot.

e-

u

is

n,

us

be e

·e-

y-

nd

be

gh

pts

and

111

ires

this

hat

the

fied

heir

n. 9.

not not

tted

permitted them to eat blood, v. 4. This precept was obliging to all the world, upon the credit of the tradition of fo few. So likewise we read in Genesis 17. that when Abraham was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared unto bim, and made a covenant with bim and his feed, to make him the father of the faithful, to bless all in his feed: And then he gave him, and all his posterity, a most ftrict precept of circumcision. All this Abraham only notified to his posterity: They all believ'd this promise and covenant of God, and they all strictly observed this precept, of circumcifion: and yet neither this precept, nor this covenant, were written for those four hundred years and more which passed between the time of Abraham and Moses, the first Scripturewriter. Was that unwritten covenant the doctrine of man? was circumcifion the precept of man? no. was the precept of not eating blood the precept of man? and yet by tradition it had all its force, even from Noab to Christ's time among the gentiles, and until the times of Moses among the jews. Well then why should the unwritten doctrine and precepts of Christ and his apostles be call'd the doctrine and precepts of men? You can fay nothing, but that the testimony of men is not sufficient ground for us to hold this doctrine and these precepts to be divine or apostolical; which is apparently false: For the men of the church of Christ, and the supreme pastors and governors thereof, cannot be of less credit and authority, than were the men of the law of nature, or of the feed of Abrabam, or the testimony of Noab and his fons. Their testimony could and did suffice to make their doctrine and precepts, delivered by God in a far more private manner, to be notwithstanding prudently believed, and embraced for divine. Why then should not the testimony of the chruch fuffice to make the unwritten doctrine of Christ and his apostles to be held for divine? It 14

is therefore no kind of proof to fay, Christ reprebends buman dostrins and precepts, therefore we must not embrace divine do Etrins and precepts, meerly because they are not written. You embrace the doctrine of men, who tell us this doctrine of yours, which is neither written nor delivered by universal tradition. Again, were not all the precepts and doctrins of Christ believed as divine for those fourscore years or thereabouts before the whole canon of scripture was finished? Of all these traditions see my Sect. 16. n. 1, 2. and the whole 19. Sect. secondly, I pray how do you avoid embracing the doctrine of men. who hold the churches authority to be meer human, and yet meerly upon her authority you receive such and such copies to be the true copies of of the true original word of God? See Sea. 4. n. 3, 1. Ge. yea, upon the meer weak testimony of your own private translators, all you (who are not exceeding skilful in Greek) take your English bible for the word of God; and again, upon the meer weak Authority of your Ministers, you take that interpretation for true which they tell you to be fo, though you cannot know it to be fo, for want of skill in Language's, and for want of skill in confering places, and for want of ability to use those twenty rules which your own doctors hold necessary for the knowing affuredly the true fense of God. Thus I might shew you how in all those twenty four necessary points (which I have hitherto shewed not contained in any part of the written word of God) you hold truly and properly the Doctrine and precepts of men, whom you believe to have meerly human authority. Thus you proceed as the Jews and pharifees did, not relying only upon the Traditions they had from Moses; (for example, concerning the Remedy against original sin appliable to Female children:) but relying upon traditions devised by some ill interpreters of their law; by

Sammai, by Killel, by Achiba, and such other rab-

bins; as St. Ferom teachs in several places.

14. Whereas you add, that our traditions are to be challenged of Contrariety to the scripture for the most part, you proceed in your usual manner, to say boldly what is for your turn, but never turn your hand or singer to prove it. Doctor, I will undertake to make good at any time, that there is incomparable more difficulty to shew that one part of the written word is not contrary to some other, than to shew that any one of our traditions is far from the least contrariety to the word of God: see seed. 23. n. 6. All scholars know I speak in this point that which is evident. Thus I have an-

swered your whole twenty third section.

15. I have now a word of great importance to fay to you and yours. You affirm the scripture alone to be necessarily admitted by us, as our sole: and only judge. In this, your part is affirmative, and so you must prove what you say. In this you contradict all visible catholic churches which were in the world at your reformation: against fo public authority evidence of scripture must be brought. or elfe you do most injuriously oppose so public an: authority, according to your own principles. Thirdly, in this you deliver a point which (if true) is no less necessary than the true choice of the only. rule directing to true faith; therefore, according to your own principles, this point must be clearly contained in scripture, in which you say all necessary points are clearly contained. But we have now at large heard every text you thought fit to bring for. a thing of fo great concernment: the answers given to every one shew clearly, not any one of them to contain that point clearly: whence I conclude. that what in such kind of matters cannot be proved: by clear texts, must not be believed, according to your own principles; therefore, even according to

them, we are not to believe that scripture is by itself alone our fole and only rule of faith, or that it clearly contains the plain decision of all necessary controversies; which it must do to be our Judge in them all. Remember Mr. Doctor how you \$ 13. tell the antiprelatical party that they are bound to bring plain and express scripture to demonstrate that episcopacy is unlawful. It were well, more authority were yielded to tradition of the churches of God. And § 14. we thence received bishops, whence we received the christian faith. So you. Say so of all you received, and I need fay no more.

Sect. 11.

A fifteenth argument. Although scripture only should be our judge, yet this judge would decide many points clearly against you.

TOU cannot but give me leave to call that I clearly decided against you by scripture, for which I can bring, at the leaft, as clear texts, as you bring for the decision of many necessary points, which you hold (by reason of such texts) to be clearly decided by scripture, as you say all points are, which be necessary to salvation. Therefore, if I can bring as clear texts for fome points of our faith opposite to yours, as you can bring for those fourteen necessary points of which I treated in my fecond fection; and as clear as you can bring for your belief of those divers points specified in my eighth fect. in which I have particularly examined all your chief texts for baptizing children: if I also can bring as clear texts as you could bring in my ninth fection, for the lawfulness of working on Saturdays, and unlawfulness of working on Sundays; or as you could bring in the precedent fection to prove that the scripture contains, and clearly decides

(1

Ы

Pr

to

cides all necessary controversies: If I can do all this, then these texts of mine cannot but be allowed by you to be indeed clear; because you say, you can bring clear texts for all points necessary (as all the above mentioned points be;) but I will shew that the texts that I shall here bring, for some prime points in which we believe contrary to you, be at the least as clear as any of those texts brought by you and affirmed by you to be very sufficiently clear. Wherefore my texts, being as clear as those which are acknowledged to be sufficiently clear; must also be acknowledged to be sufficiently clear; must also be acknowledged to be sufficiently clear; must also be acknowledged to be sufficiently clear;

ficiently clear. Now then to my texts.

10

15

s,

ts

e,

ur

ose

ny

my

ned

my

Sa-

lys;

n to

ides

2. What imports more a dying christian, than to have his fins forgiven him; and that upon the word of God? And yet you cry superstition, superstion, if a priest be called to pray over bim, and to anoint bim with oil, to procure forgiveness of bis Sins. But what faith your own bible? is any manfick among you, let bim call for the elders (the Priests) of the church, and let them pray over bim, anointing bim with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of the faithful shall save the fick. And the Lord shall raise bim up, and if be bas committed: fins they shall be forgiven bim. James 5. 14. Have you among all the texts which you cited. and I examined in the last section, any one text but half so clear for what you intended to prove, as this text is to prove extreme unction to forgive fins: and confequently to be a facrament, or visible fign. (such an one as the act of anointing is) of invisible grace conferred thereby to forgive his fins? for (faith the text) if be be in fins, they shall be forgiven bim. If you have but any one text half fo clear for that prime fundamental point of yours, I pray bring it forth now whilft that and the answer to that is in fresh memory; that answer will tell

you what I have to fay against any such text: let us fee what you can fay against this text? fome anfwer, that it relates to the gift of healing in those days; which shift is directly against the words of the text, faying, if be bas committed fins, they shall be forgiven. Again what scripture have you to prove that the elders in the days of St. James cured all infirm men with anointing them with oil? lastly, I am most earnest to know by what clearer text than this, you were forced to forfake the practice of this facrament used by all catholic churches upon earth, when you cast it off as superstitious; where is, I pray, your fo much boafted of evidence of scripture against so public authority? Mr. Doctor remember your own words cited in the end of my last section. Remember' that you § 43. fay, that the universal practice of the church is the best interpreter of scripture, where there is no plain text (as here there is not) to take away all gainfaying.

3 When a little after your first reformation you (contrary to all the churches both of east and west) denied the real presence of Christ in the sacrament; by what clearer text could you evidently demonfrate that those following texts could not be truly interpreted of a real presence? this is my body: the bread which I will give is my flesh. My flesh is meat indeed, my blood is drink indeed: Infomuch as be who eateth or drinketh unworthily is guilty of the body and blood of our Lord. This is the cup of the new testament, which cup (as is evident by the Greek text, where the gender agrees only with the cup) Shall be Shed for you: that then in the cup was the very same blood which was shed. Give me, as clear texts as these are, to prove, that one man may not at the same time have two wives, or that he may labour on the Saturday, but not on the Sunday, &c?

4. Again

4. Again, when you denied the priest of the church to have power to forgive fins, contradicting also herein all the catholic churches upon the earth; what clearer text did you bring against them all, to prove that they falfely interpreted to their purpose this text: be breathed upon them, and faid, rubose sins soever ye shall remet, they are remitted: and whose sins soever ye shall retain, they are retained, fo. 20. 22. against public authority you should bring evident demonstration of scripture, according to your own principles: we now must earnestly call for this evidence in the three facraments here mentioned by me. We call at leaft, for clearer places than these be, in case you say thefe be not clear enough to decide the controverfy for us. And we call for fuch places to decide all those four and twenty necessary points which I have mentioned: which being necessary, must be shewed to be decided rightly by clear scripture; and consequently by clearer texts than any of these are; in case you deny these to be sufficiently clear give us those clearer texts, and we will confess ourselves silenced. If you cannot do this; this little will ferve to filence you.

1,

ct

ou

A)

it;

nuly

the 1 45

n 25

the

the the

the

cup

sive

one

s, or

t on

Again

Sect. 12.

A fixteenth argument, that the Holy Fathers never allowed the scripture for the only rule of faith.

I. T is most unreasonable to say, that the I greatest doctors of the primitive church did not know the only rule of faith: for this point importing above all points, the apostles must needs (had it been fo) have imprinted it deeply in the minds of all they instructed; and all their disciples

would have done the like to their disciples: so that many of the church, especially the most learned of the whole church, would not be ignorant of this point: at least I am sure, that you may sooner now be presumed ignorant of the only true rule of faith,

than they then.

2. First then, had the holy fathers ever allowed of the scripture for the only rule of faith, they neither would, nor could have held any men heretics for holding that which was contrary to no clear scripture: but they did hold many such to be heretics, as I have shewed feet. 8. where I shewed that St. Austin did hold on the one fide, that baptism of children could not be proved by clear scripture; and yet he, in and with the Milevetan council condemned those for heretics who did deny the necessity of baptism for children. See Seet. 7. N. 3, 4, 5, 8. There also N. 6. he and Vincentius Lirinensis account them heretics who held rebaptization necessary to all baptized by heretics: and yet he held on the other fide, that this point could not be cleared out of only scripture; see them N. 7. In the next number I did show how antiquity held also the quarta-decimani for heretics, though the believing Eafter ought to be always kept on the fourteenth day of the moon be not against clear scripture. There also I shewed out of St. Epiphanius, and also St. Austin (who expressly in the beginning of his catalogue professeth to put down none but such as are true heretics) that Aerius was held by antiquity for an heretic, because be denied prayer for the dead, and beld that there was no fasting days of precept : in which points I am fure you will lay that this Aerius held nothing contrary to fcripture. There also I shewed out of St. Epiphanius and St. Austin, that the Antidicomarites or Helvidians were held heretics by antiquity, for denying that our lady after the birth of our Saviour did ever live a virgin: which

1

4

u

fo

I

(L

the

noi

ria

mo al! which point is not clear in scripture. Therefore all those were heretics, not for contradicting scripture; yet they were heretics for contradicting some rule of faith: therefore there is some other rule of faith besides scripture; and consequently scripture alone is not the only rule of faith.

0

d

1-

10

us

0-

nd

ld .

N.

ty

gh

he

ar

a-

e-

ne

eld

yet

ays

lay

re. St.

ere

ady

in:

3. Secondly, it was by holy fathers noted to be peculiar to heretics to stand to scripture only. and to refuse all other rules: so the Macedonians and Eunomians, baving no regard of what was taught to the contrary by the multitude and antiquiquity of christians, denied the Holy Ghost to be glorified with the Father and the Son; because the scripture did no where expressly say this. St Basil de sp. sanc. c. 25. and l. 1. contra eunom. So the Pelagians (in St. Auftin, de natura & gratia, c. 39.) were used to lay, let us believe that which we read but let us believe it to be a wickedness to believe that which we do not read. So St. Austin. L. I. against Maximinus the Arian bishop, brings him in, faying if thou bring forth any things from those divine scriptures which are common to us both, we must needs bear thee. But those speeches which are not in scripture, be by no means received by us, feeing that our Lord admonisheth us, and saith, without cause they worship me, teaching the commandments and precepts of men. So he. And just so you, as is clear by your objection in the last fection but one before this, Num. 13. And again, I wish to be the disciple of divine scriptures. Wherefore the council of Sens in the seventh age decreed (Decreto 5. that it was a dangerous thing to be in that error, that nothing is to be admitted which is not drawn from scripture. For many things are derived by Christ from the bands of the apostles from mouth to mouth, &c. which are to be belden without all doubt. See feet. 20. 4. Thirdly,

4. Thirdly, the holy fathers expressly refuse to dispute out of scriptures only, upon this very cause. that they do not fuffice to end and decide all controversies. So the most antient Tertullian speaks first in general, of never disputing with heretics c, 17. out of scriptures only, because this scripture-combat availetb to nothing, but to the making either ones flomach, or ones brains to turn, lib. de praf. c. 17. And by and by he in particular faith of the Gnoffics, that which we may fay of our adversaries, this beresy does not receive some scriptures; (you put ten books among the Apocrypba) some scriptures they receive with additions and detractions ordered to their turn: fee what I said of your translations, feel. 5. and those scriptures they receive in any manner intirely, they turn to their turn by new devised expositions, (see how you do this, see. 7. Then he concludes generally, we must not therefore appeal to scriptures, nor in our combat rely upon them, in which either no victory is to be obtained, or a very uncertain one. Which, how true it is, you may fee in my scripture-disputation about the keeping of Sunday, feet. 9 where I gave you text for text, as good as you brought or could bring. Thus the Anabaptifts do not only weary you out, and thew you to the very eye; that, standing to scripture alone, they are invincible by you; but also they sometimes force your prime doctors to leave their standing on scripture only, and force them to By to tradition. See Dr. Taylor, plain confession hereof, fed. 1. N. 4. And your great Beza found this infifting upon scripture only to breed such endless jarring, that in his last book but one, be professet bimself to be weary of such combats and encounters, because be finds controversies thereby made but brawls; and therefore wishes, that in some common assembly of churches all these stripes a once were decided. The evidence of this point made

A

ly

ad

do

rig

Spe

tor

fur

made your learned Sutcliff in his review, P. 42. to fay, it is false that we will admit of no judge but scripture; for we appeal still to a lawful general council. But here I would ask, how we can rest upon the sentence given by a general council, if that be not infallible; for still every man must be calling this sentence to review made by his own weak judgment, as has been fully declared, sect. 1.

N. 1, 2, 3, 4.

.

s,

P-

n

ey

10

8,

n-

ed

en

p+

m,

ve-

ou

ep.

or

us

and

10-

illo

ave

2 to

ION

und

uch

, be

and

reby

t 18

oint made

5. Some of our adversaries think to shift off the authority of Tertullian, as if it were delivered against those only who rejected great part of the scriptures, and corrupted other parts; which, fay they, we do not. I answer, that of your like proceedings I have spoken enough in the places cited jointly with Tertullians words; but this your shift is clearly undone by Tertullians own words following, C. 45. We now bitherto have in general (mark his word) treated against all beresses, repelling them (all) upon certain just and necessary exceptions from conferring out of scriptures. So he. Yea the very drift of a great part of this his little. book, is independently of all scripture, to confute all heretics, by proving that true believers must be able to shew by tradition the descent of their doctrine from the apostles. But if, indeed, trutb flands for us (faith he, C. 37.) who soever we be who walk in that rule which the church has received from Christ, Christ from God, we proceed manifestly in our intent, defining that beretics ought not to be admitted to make their appeal to scriptures whom we do prove without the scriptures, not to have any right to the scriptures. Note here first, that he speaks of such as would appeal to scriptures; therefore they did receive them. Note secondly, that without scriptures, Tertullian promiseth himself the lurest victory, by forcing them to shew their visible fuccession, and to shew their doctrine delivered from hand to hand by tradition, or word of mouth; as that word was which the apostles received from Christ, and Christ from God. By this rule he would have us all walk.

6. Our adversaries use to alledge some passages of fathers appealing in their disputes against heretics unto the scriptures, chiefly St. Auflin, who disputing against the Donatifts conceived himself to have most manifest texts to prove against them, that Christs true church could never grow fo low, as to be visible only in part of Africa; the visibility of Christs church through the world being manifest in scripture, as he faith, de unitate Ecclesia, C. 7, 11, 15, & 17. But it is no good argument to fay, the fathers appealed to the scriptures in fome few points, in which they knew they had manifest advantages; therefore they approved appealing to scripture only in any kind of controverfy: fo it is no argument to fay, the fathers did exact written texts of scripture in proof of some hereitical novelties, and professed they would not give ear to fuch novelties without written texts; therefore we must not admit of any, though never to ancient belief of the whole church, delivered by tradition from the apostles, without some clear written text can be alledged for it. This is no consequence; for in points which are known not to be delivered by tradition, yea, not fo much as pretending to it, is a good argument to fay, give me a clear text for this, or elfe with the same facility that you affirm it, I will deny it as I said fed. 10. N. 9, 10. Do but note what I faid there, and then join it to these places, and all places alledgable out of the fathers will eafily be folved.

7. All those fathers which might be alledged (and part of them is alledged feet. 8.) for holding traditions in points necessary to salvation, no where

expressed

t

T-

of

ed

ne

es

e-

10 to

n,

1-

a-

æ, nt

ın

ad

p-

1-

id

10

ot

s;

e-

1-

10

15

m

:h

y,

16

id

e,

1-

ed

ng

re

expressed in scripture; as also all those who hold the authority of the church by itself to suffice to ground our faith, and to determine all our controversies (whom we shall cite fect. 21.) all these, I say, clearly hold, that scripture is not the only rule, guide and direction of all that is necessary to be believed, or done by us for obtaining salvation.

QUEST. III.

Whether the church be the judge appointed by God to end all our controversies? with a word of the Socinians concerning reason being our judge.

1. COME men may perhaps wonder why, in fo I short a work, I should be so long in proving the scripture not to be, by itself alone, our only rule, or direction of faith; but those who are understanding scholars will easily see, how, after the proof of that point, I have in a manner dispatched all this business; because all sectaries, making their standing to the sole judgment of scripture, to be the only foundation of all and every one of their so several sects; when now this foundation is shewed not to ferve the end they intend, but that we must yet have a judge giving us infallible affurance of many necessary verities of which the scripture alone does not affure us; hence tollows manifestly the utter overthrow of all these and all other imaginable fects, by the apparent necessity of holding the true church of Christ to be this judge, she only being the judge, to which we are fent by icripture itself, with an obligation of our being held for publicans or heathens unless we hear her. Neither is there any kind of probability now left of anding any other judge sufficient to direct us in all things,

things necessary to salvation, and to end all our controversies, and sufficient to contain us all in unity of one interior faith, and exterior profession of the same, with all other conditions requisite in

our judge.

2. Human reason, so adored by the Socinians, cannot be this judge: first, because fallible; but with this they eafily dispense, denying any faith to be infallible. Secondly, no one parish in the world was ever yet known to be of this their opinion, is it then likely to be true in the eyes of any rational man? what wit is there in thinking to be wifer than all wits? what reason to make reason judge in things known to surpass reason? Thirdly, does not reason persuade any man to think that it is fitter for him to submit to the authority of all the christians of all ages, and places, who ever had any thing like a church, than to adhere to a few scattered self-conceited people, pretending to find out a wifer ground of religion, than ever was acknowledged by any kind of people in the world, who had the shape of any universal and perpetual church? of which more fed. 14. Fourtbly, how imprudently did the apostle exhort all Idem sapere, to be of one opinion, to keep unity in faith, to speak one thing, to be perfect in one sense, and one judgment, 1 Cor. I. and 2. Cor. 13. if he knew it were Gods will that every one should follow his own judgment, which every one has as different almost from another, as their faces are? Fiftbly, what an improtionable means is this to keep that unity in faith, and to adbere to what has been Evangelized or delivered unto us, though an angel should come to persuade the contrary? For let but an abler man than myself come, and shew me, that I have not so good reason for what I believe as he has, and as he (if we stand only to reason without 11

n

n

n

lt

d

n,

1-

it

all

to

25

d.

ial

W

re.

ak

lg-

it

his

ent

ply.

eep
een
igel
but
me,
eve
ison

without respect to authority) can bring to the contrary; I muit (fay they) follow what he proposeth: So that weak men must be weather-cocks. Sixtbly, is it not all reason, that what convincing motives make evidently credible to be revealed by God, that I should credit that not as the word of man, but receive it as the word of God, as truly it is, and fo rely upon it as strongly as is fit to rely on the word of God? Seventbly. according to this unreasonable ground, there must be allowed, all the world over, as great variety of believing more or less, as there is of understanding more or less: and as great contrariety of belief must be lawful, as there is contrariety in the judgments of one to another, and of the same man in different occasions. Can any creature, who is but like a rational man, believe that the world was taught to proceed so by Christ, and his apostles, or that the world did ever proceed fo in any one age? what record testifieth any such thing? is this to bring into captivity all understandings to the obedience of Christ? 2. Cor. 10. 5. If this wild liberty be called captivity; I am fure that, by as good a figure, you Secinians (who call yourselves rational men) may as truly be called the most irrational of all christian men. You needs must pardon me if I judge so, for your own principle, of following what my own reason tells me, makes me most really to think so, after mature consideration of the matter.

The Chair vice

Sect. 13#

It is declar'd what we understand when we seek, whether the Church is to be our Judge or no?

1. IT must still be carried in our minds, that we I are in fearch of the Judge appointed us by Christ; and consequently we must proceed as men do, who first feek after a general knowledge in gross, and then descend to particulars. So first we fearched whether God had given us any judge; then finding that he has given us some infallible direction, we did fee whether this were given fufficiently in any one Book of Scripture, or in any particular number of Books, or in the whole canon taken together. But we, not finding as yet what we fought, we cast an eye upon natural reason, which if it were to be follow'd by us as our judge, this very judge of ours (that is our own Reason) told us the neither was, nor appear'd like to that judge we fought for, she being a judge not ending, but endlesly raising doubts in all points; still therefore we are in our general fearch. And we have only in gross got a hint of finding some infallible means, to guide us securely in all our doubts, in that blesfed congregation of people which follow'd the instructions of Christ, and his disciples, still propagating the Doctrine deliver'd to them from age to age until we come to our age. Here, or no where, this infallible direction is to be had. by what particular way this congregation is to communicate, and impart this direction unto us, is not the thing we now feek at the first; but it is the very last thing we can feek for. For that being found, we are to follow that particular means, and by no means to stray one foot from it. must seek that we may find, and after we have

once

b

u

b

fo

li

de

th

de

th

de

fo

ha

m

in

a th

w

Wa

as

in

oth

lib

W

me

wh

inta

thi

our

cong

Goa

Fait

once found what we fought for, we must stand still sirmly fixed in the faith we have found. Because by what we have found we are also taught to believe this particular, that we are to rest free from surther inquiry; because our God would not have us follow any other judges than he appoints; therefore he would have us seek after no other, but believe that no other was to be sought after, lest so we should be always seekers and never be believers; as Tertullian discourseth admirably, C. 7.

de Præscript.

16-

ve

ye

en

in

·ft

e;

1-

u-

U-

en

we

ch

nis

ble

ge

ut

e

nly

ns,

tl-

יח-

)2-

to

no

3ut

to

us,

t 18

be-

ms,

Ve

ave

2. We do not therefore as yet fearch whether this particular means of directing us, be by the decrees of the chieff pastor of this church, or by the counsels held without him, or held by him and defining together with him; for this fearch is yet a further work, tho' it be a work foon dispatched, for as much as concerns our purpose, after that we have once affuredly found out that this infallible means is to be found in this bleffed congregation instituted by his disciples, and their followers with a visible succession in all ages from Christs age to this. Now then, this one thing we fearch for, is whether this bleffed congregation (which we always understand here, when we name the church, as long as we speak of searching our guide or judge in a more general manner) has not fome means or other appointed by God, by which the can infallibly guide us to the knowledge of the true faith? When we have found that she has some such means; we shall readily pass on further, to see what means this is. Now let us be fure not to intangle ourselves with that further search; or any thing belonging to it; until we have fully fatisfied our selves of this general verity that this blessed songregation bas in it some means appointed by God, to direct all to the knowledge of the only true Neither yet do we begin to fearch, whether this congregation, instituted thus by Christ, and still visibly continuing in his doctrine, be the church of Rome, or the protestant church, or both these, or any other besides these, of which hereafter: But that one thing for which now we only search is, whether this congregation (wheresever it is) has not some infallible means appointed by God, to be follow'd by all, that all may come to be sav'd in it?

3. And we most groundedly say, that this church (still meaning by this name the congregation we fpeak of) is our infallible Judge: and confequently, this judge has some infallible means to guide all to the truth in all points of faith, tho' not exprely contain'd in Scriptures, and to decide all our controversies in religion; for which I shall give my reasons in the ensuing section. But before I begin it, I note in a word, that this church, having fome infallible means appointed by God to dired us in the only true faith, (without which faith eternal falvation cannot be had) it must be a damnable fin not to take pains, in a tolerable manner, to find it out, and to embrace it when we have found it: for otherwise we should neglect the execution of what God has appointed us to do, in a matter necessary to our falvation; and we should also in against that charity which every one owes to his own Soul, if, having means offer'd us, to be infallibly guided in the choice of that faith necessary to falvation, we should neither take ordinary pains to find it nor to follow it when we had found it. This lesson is so very necessary to many thousands, that it deserves to be a thousand times over inculcated unto them.

h

e

W

A.

he

e-

ly

rer

by to

rch

sw

tly,

1 to

elly

con-

my

egin

Ving

ired

eter-

able

r, to

ound

ution

atter

o fin

o his

oe in-

effary

pains

ind it.

fands,

incul-

Sect. 14.

It is prov'd out of the Old Testament, That the Church is our Infallible Judge in all Controversies of Faith.

I. FOR more than two thousand years before any word of the old testament was written. Gods church had some infallible way to end all controversies; for all that time there was no scripture, and yet there were many points then necessary to be believ'd, in which Men of various judgments might vary in their judgments: For example, about the belief of reward, and punishment of the life to come; about the Immortality of the Soul; about the fall of Adam; the promise of a Redeemer, and afterwards of this Redeemers being to be the fon of Abrabam; about the necessity of the circumcision given unto him, &c. The church of that time was the only judge of all thefe, and fuch like controversies: And as they, who oppos'd her known tradition, were accounted misbelievers; so those who believ'd them, are declar'd by St. Paul to have had the same spirit of faith that we, 2 Cor. 4. 13. Shall not then Christs church be as much enabled by God to pass an infallible decision, of what is to be held now by us in point of faith? The like argument holds strong in the jewish church, which, from the time of Moses, to the time of Christ, had some infallible means, besides scripture to end all controversies, as appears by Deut. 7. 8. Where those words, And they shall bew the sentence of judgment, and thou shalt do according to it, &c. And those other words, the man that will do presumptuously, and will not bearten to the Priest, even that man shall die: Clearly intimate

intimate the infallibility of this judges fentence, For God would never oblige all to follow an erring Judgment, which defines often lies for truth; and oblige all to embrace those lies under pain of death. Secondly, the refuserers to embrace a lie do not do presumptuously, as God fays those de, who will not hearken to the priests: he therefore ever fays the truth. Thirdly, according to the true translated bibles, it is said in the ninth verse, of the priest, Who shall shew thee the truth of the Judgment. Which words prove, that God would affift in declaring always the truth. Fourthly, it had been a most unjust murther to put a man to death for not following that which might well be a lie: God would never have enacted fuch a law. Fifthly, Joseph the Jew L. 2. contra Apion. testifies their bigb priests to bave been their judges of controverses. And Dr. Whitaker, & Sacra Scrip. Pag. 466. acknowledging as much, fays, it was not lawful to appeal, for otherwise there would have been no end of contention. Shall Christs church, which is the mistress and lady, want that which the Jewish had, she being but the handmaid?

2. Before I come to the texts, which speak particularly of Christs church, I appeal to any sober judgment, who shall ponder them with due reflection, to judge whether they be not, to the very such as clear to prove my intent, as any of those which any of our adversaries can bring, for anyone of those twenty four necessary points, which have heretofore shewed to be clearly set down in no recipture, though they affirm them all to have clear texts of scripture for them? Whence again, ask, how you can deny these my texts to be clear, which are in any sober judgment as clear, as those which you all hold (and must hold) to be clear and particularly, I wish the texts I am now going

n

n

hi

tri

ve

de

on

is i

1000

20

on

as i

chu

to cite, were equally ballanced with those texts which Dr. Fern and others cite, to prove that scripture is our only judge; for so my reader (if he will but please to turn to those texts fed. 10.) may foon fee whether, even according to the judgment of scripture, (their own only judge) the church be no better proved to be our judge, than the scripture alone is proved to be so. And I desire all to note, how unjustly we are dealt withal, who being advantaged by the peaceable possession of all public ecclefiaftical authority, which any catholic church had in the world, at that time in which you began your reformation (all which authority flood for the churches being the infallible judge;) and yet no evidence of scripture half so good, being brought against this our authority, as we can bring for it; we, not with standing were dispossessed of it, and condemned of the most unjust usurpation that ever was, by those who hold, that against public authority evident demonstration of scripture must be brought. Examine the texts I shall bring. and then examine your weak evidences brought in my tenth section.

1-

ch

eir

ch.

vise hall

dy, but

par-

ober flec-

very

thole

y one ich I

wn in

have

ain,

clear,

thole

clear

going

3. Again, before I cite these texts, I must needs desire my reader to carry along with him in his mind one note more, which is this; that all these texts speak still of a church always teaching truth in all points which he proposes to be believed, and not in some certain points only. This I desire much to be noted, because our adversaries only acknowledge, that by these texts the church is secured from erring fundamentally, to the subversion of saving saith; as Dr. Fern acknowledges seed.

20. This confession of theirs undoeth all religion; because the texts I am going to alledge speak as universally, and as far from all limitation of the churches being by God secured from all kind of

K 2

error, fundamental, or not fundamental, as any texts speak of the apostles or prophets being secured from all kind of error fundamental, or not fundamental: and you by limiting these texts to the only fecuring of the church from only fundamental errors, do teach others in like manner to limit those texts by which the prophets, or apostles are faid to be secured from error, to only such a security, as secures them from fundamental errors only; which would be a most damnable doctrine: for, thence would follow, that the fundamental points being very few, (as you fay) all that is written, or faid by the apostles, or prophets, which concerns not those few fundamental points might be false, as being delivered by men not secured from error in any points not fundamental. For my part, I take the most fundamental point of faith to be this, that there is a God speaking infallible truth in all that he fays, by what instrument foever any one of his fayings, in any matter (whatfoever it be) is proposed by him; whether this instrument be the church, as it was, for the first two thousand years of the world, or the prophets, or apostles raised up in his church. And now let us proceed on to our texts.

4. My first text is out of Isa. 2. v. 2, 3. And it shall come to pass in the last days (so the apostles called the time of the new law) that the mountains of the Lords bouse shall be established in the top of mountains (behold its great visibility, so that) all nations shall slow unto it (behold its vast extent) and say (with joy) come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the bouse of the God of Jacob; and he (note this word he) will teach us his ways (in this house or church,) for out of Sion shall go forth the law (as it did by the apostles on Whit-sunday;) and the word of God from Jerusalem

in

fac

ch

wh

be

to fall

54.

lem (from whence the churches first preachers began the divulging of their doctrine:) and he shall judge among the nations, (not in his person, for Christ went not out of Tury; but he shall judge among the nations) by his churches tribunal erected among all nations, fo conspicuously, that they all may flow to it: will any man fay, his judgment is fallible? in this tribunal it is be who teacheth us his ways; dare you lay that be teacheth us errors? is any error, (though not fundamental) his way? Christ then, erecting a church visible to the whole world, that the whole world might refort with joy unto it for necessary instruction; and intending him felf to instruct them by it, and by it to judge among all nations; had not complied with this intention of his, if he had not fecured that church from all error, by which he himself teacheth all the world his ways, and not superitious errors. And had this his church been liable to pass salse judgment in deciding controversies about faith; the diffrace had redounded to God, who authorized that tribunal, to be that very court in which, to the joy of all, be judgeth among all nations.

5. My second text is out of the same prophet C. 35. promising to us, that the coming of Christ, away so direct (not only in itself) but so direct unto us, that fools cannot err by it. Is it not then infallible? but of this text I say no more here, because I have pondered it already in the very presace, Num 3. I only note, that this way being so direct to us all, must needs be only in such a church, as is of a vast extent, and so visible every where in all ages, that all men of all places might be in all ages directed by it, and so directed, as not to err; for sools cannot err by it. What more in-

fallible in order to us?

ıt

t-

ft

S,

et

it

les

ins

of

all

nt)

the

! of

2 115

sion

on

usa-

lem

6. My third text is out of the same prophet, C.
54. where first mention is made most gloriously of

K 2 the

the wast extent of Christs visible church; sing O barren, &c. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them Aretch forth the curtains of thy babitations. Spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy Stakes. For thou Shalt break forth on the right-band and on the left, and thy feed shall inherit the Gentiles. As I bave fworn, that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so I have sworn, that I would not be wroth with thee (as I am with all who admit superstitious and foul errors to reign over them.) Every tongue that shall rife against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. The tongues of all heretics are tongues that rife against the church, in judging contrary to her definitions in matters of faith; but fear not (O church of God) for every tongue that shall rife against thee in judgment thou falt condemn: Yea, their very rifing in opposition of judgment unto thee, is their condemnation; because, hence appears, that the church differs in judgment from them, which is enough (in the opinion of St. Austin) to make us hold them heretics; for just in the end of his catalogue or book of herefies he fays, it is superfluous to set down what the church (in particular) has defined against them all; but (fays he) Scire sufficiat eam contra ifta sentire, Let it suffice (for their condemnation of herefie) that she is contrary in her judgment to them all. And therefore it is not lawful to hold any one of them. See Seel. 21. N. 4.

7. My fourth text is out of the same prophet, Cap. 59 v. 20, 21. which text (Rom. 11. v. 26.) St. Paul interprets to be spoken of the church of Christ, to which, after his coming, many of the Jews were to unite themselves being to be baptized in it, instructed in it, governed by it, and consequently the text speaks of such a visible church, as that must needs be, to whom the Jews converted could unite themselves to be by it baptized, instructed,

structed, governed. To this visible church thus fays our Lord, as for me this is my covenant with them, fays our Lord: my spirit (free from all estor) that is upon thee and my words (free from error great or little) which I have put in thy mouth, Ithat mouth by which visibly she does teach my ways to all nations that flow unto thee, that mouth by which I judge among all nations, that mouth which shall condemn every tongue that shall rife against it in judgment) my words (I say) which I bave put in (this) thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth (thus visibly teaching, judging, &c.) nor out of the mouth of thy feed; nor out of the mouth of thy feeds feed; fays the Lord, from bence forth and for ever. Behold here the spirit of truth intailed upon the church visible, and Gods words but in ber mouth, by which the teaches all nations in her first age; and in the mouth of her feed, by which she teaches all nations in the second age; and in the mouth of ber feeds feed from thenceforth and for ever, by which she teaches all nations in the third age, and in every other age thence forth following. to the end of the world. Find me then an age, in which this everlasting visible church shall teach any error, though never fo little? If you can do this, then in that age his covenant was made void.

chapter (to wit, Isa. 60. v. 10) in which God by the prophet triumphs in the vast extent and glory of his church visible, the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee, thy gates shall be open continually (a poor glory if they admit in idolatry, superstition, &c.) they shall not be shut day nor night, that man may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought (securely from all error to be instructed by thee:) for the nation and kingdom

kingdom which will not ferve thee, shall perish. The fense of which last words is clearly this: what nation foever refuses to ferve the church, by not submitting to her doctrine, shall perish, not temporally in this world, in which they often flourish; but eternally in the next. It is therefore damnable not to submit to the doctrine of some church which is visible at all times, and known to all nations; for it could never be damnable not to fubmit to an invisible church; there must then ever be some visible church on earth, which all nations under pain of damnation are to serve; and to which God may truly fay, the nation and kingdom that will not ferve thee, shall perish. Now tell me, I pray, when this English nation, by a national fynod (as they call it) acknowledged no visible church which this nation was bound to ferve, but decreed many things contrary to all the visible churches; how escaped they this sentence of damnation? I confess nations should do well, and should further their salvation, in resusing to serve all churches then vifble, if all those churches did both err, and also father their lies upon God the father of truth, venting their own errors for divine verities: but, I fav, it is impossible that all the visible churches in the whole world should in any age come to this pass; for in every age it must be true, that the nation and kingdom which will not ferve thee, shall perish. But you will say perhaps, for these ten or twelve ages her errors have eclipfed her. Read then the following verses, I will make thee an everlasting excellency, (an excellent church indeed, which fathers her lies and fuperstitions upon God himself.) It follows, but should not follow, if this were true, And thou shalt fuck the breaks of kings, &c. yea, thy Sun Shall no more go down. neither shall the Moon withdraw itfelf; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light:

b

1

te

m

fh

In

B

pec

ma

(w

ang

(ide

light: how an everlasting light? an everlasting excellency, which ended with an eclipse of some thirteen hundred years, if the failed with the third age, as Dr. Hammond and others please to say? which third age was before the fucked the breafts of kings, whence appears the falfity of their affertion. Again, how does it follow, the days of thy mourning shall be ended? when you make her to have so sad a time of mourning as thirteen hundred, or (at the least) a thousand years, under the yoke of popery? how truly then does God in the next chapter v. 7. promise her sons, that an everlasting joy shall be unto them: whereas the days of popery are acknowledged to have covered the face of all chriftendom four times as long as the day of her true joy? how then also is it said to her in the end of the next chapter following, thou shalt be called a city fought for, and not for faken; if all this while fhe were the woman fled into the defert? away, away with these false glosses; these words of Isaiab. must needs be understood of a visible church, which was not only fought for, but also inhabited; and not forfaken, nor left forlorn, nor made abandoned by idolatry, superstition, &c. and errors intollerable, as Dr. Fern calls those of the church, feet.

9: My fixth text (for I will count all the many texts, in the last number, but for one, which might be urged severally, all having great force) shall be out of the prophet Daniel, C. 2. v. 44. In the days of those kingdoms, the God of Heaven shall raise up a kingdom, which shall not be dispersed, and his kingdom shall not be delivered to another people. And then to signify the vast extent, the manifest visibility, and perpetuity of this kingdom (which is his church, sounded by Christ) it follows, and it shall break in pieces and consume all these (idolatrous) kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

b

15

5,

1-

ıt

ilt

170

t-

ng

K 5

Behold,

Behold, here God promising the kingdom raised by him, that kingdom of his only true church, which visibly has by its doctrine broke in pieces all idolatrous kingdoms of the known world, and is fo well secured of Gods affistance, to preserve it in quality of a kingdom, that, even in this quality, it thall always continue, and fland for ever a glorious visible kingdom. And thus literally is fulfilled that, Luke 1, 33. And be shall reign in the bouse of Jacob for ever. Whence I argue thus; no church fallen into herefy, schism, idolatry, superstition, yea no church fallen so deep towards Hell, as to father grofs, and intollerable errors upon God, delivering them as divine verities, can be faid to be Gods kingdom; or (being fo foully fallen) to be his flanding kingdom, or permitting gross errors to reign in quality of divine verities, to be the boufe of Jacob, in which he reigns for ever; therefore to verify these texts of scripture, there mnst be found some ever-visible church upon earth, a church flourishing in quality of his standing kingdom, not fallen into such errors as you fay did reign, but a church where be, and not any error may reign. This kingdom, fo fecured from error, is that which I call Christs visible, perpetual, and infallible church, the bouse of our Lord established (so as to stand visibly for ever) in the top of all mountains, and all nations shall flow unto it, and say, come, and let us go up to the mountain of our Lord, and to the boufe of the God of Jacob, in which be shall reign for ever, and be will teach us bis ways, and not gross errors of superstion, idolatry, and there be fall judge among the nations, even be who cannot give a false judgment, and consequently infallible is his tribunal erected here in his church, to fend forth his decrees, by which he governs, and reigns. If error be president in this his tribunal, error should reign, and not be: I pray mark how

ce

fitly all the above cited texts agree with this interpretation, and how harmonically they explicate and confirm one another.

10. It is also a thing most remarkable how, at the very first attentive reading of these text, all these new upstart sects (and socinianism as well as the rest, yea and so much the sooner, because it never flourished in one whole parish,) how, I say, all these new upstart sects, presently appear to be so exceedingly unlike to Gods only true church, which is foretold to be of so vast extent, so glorious for the multitude, and magnificent of her professors, as kings, yea all kings, princes, and chief potentates of the earth, so conspicuously visible in all ages, and places, that there is no tolerable interpretation to be thought of, by which thefe and fuch like texts can be applied to any one of these. congregations? take protestanism, and allow it to contain all these new fangled sees; and yet all the professors of it will not make the thirtieth part of Christendom, although Christendom be but the fifth part of the world. But take protestanism as it was for some twelve hundred years befor Luther, and so downward, in every one of those twelve ages to Luther; and you will not find it to be the ten thousand part of the world, even by its own account: yea by true account it will be found not to have had one parish any where. How then do fuch kind of religious agree to these descriptions of the true church in the scripture? especially if to the former places you add divers others of the fame nature, as that Ifa. 49. (which St. Paul Act. 13. interprets of the church) it is a light thing that thou should be my servant to raise up (only) the tribes of Jacob; I will also give thee, for a light to Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the Earth. Kings shall fee, and arife; princes also shall worship. Behold, these shall come trom.

n

0

se se

o

h

ot

n.

h

to

15,

nd

be

gn

101

be

ot

ble

end

ind

ial,

OW

thy

from far, and lo thefe from the North, and from the Well, and thefe from the land Sinam. Sing O Heaven, and be joyful O Earth, the children which thou falt bave, fall fay again, the place is too frait for me: give place to me that I may dwell , kings shall be thy nur fing fathers, and queens thy nur fing-mothers (they shall not be thy heads, or governors, but) they fall bow down to thee with their faces towards the Earth, and lick up the duft of thy feet (proftrating themselves to kis the feet of thy fupreme paftor) tell me now, of what church speaks this prophet? where was it? read also this next chapter; kings shall walk in the brightness of the rifing. Their kings shall minister unto thee, and not rule over thee, as thy chief governors. And yet much more, C. 62. particularly, all kings shall fee thy noble one, with that other eloquent expression of the churches visible gloriousness, pass ye, pass ye through the gates, and prepare a way for the people, and make the journey plain, and pick up the flones, and lift up the fign to the people: behold our lord will make beard to the end of the Earth. For, as David faid, Pf. 21. v 28. All the ends of the Earth skall remember, and be converted to our lord, and all the families of the Gentiles shall adore in his fight. And Malachy. 1, 11. From the rifing of the Sun, even to the going down of the fame, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and every where incense skall be offered to my name (as it is in the Roman church) and a pure offering (of Christs pure body.)

if

h

a

0

It

bu

by

In

be

ful

the

pre

we

all

clear of the vast extent, majesty, and glory of the church, with its perpetuity in all ages, that divers of our adversaries, not finding any church upon Farth, but the Roman, to which they could be applied, and persuading themselves that the Roman church was false; became so wicked, as to deny

all christian religion, because they could not see their own scriptures verified in it, as it is most fully shewed in the protestants apology, tract. 2. C. 1. There you shall fee how this consideration made that famous protestant David George, to preach against Christ and his apostles. This made your chief paftor of Heidelberg, Adam Nauferus to turn Turk. This made your Alemanus to turn lew, having been a great disciple of your great Beza, with a multitude of others here in England, cited by the above-named author. Now I conclude. that christianity cannot be maintained without such a church, as is here described, to be found somewhere on Earth; which church cannot be found, if the Roman church be fuch a church as you make her. But whether she be Christs only true church. and our judge, we shall see hereafter. Now I go

Sect. 15.

It is proved out of the New Testament, that the church is our infallible judge in all controversies of faith.

15

3.0

re

ne

re

fo

he

TS

on

p-

an

ny

add fix more out of the old scripture, I add fix more out of the new. My seventh text then is, Mat. 16, 19 Upon this rock I will build my church (that church which Christ foretold by the prophets, to be of so vast extent, so visible in all ages to the end of the world) and the gates of bell shall not prevail against it. Of this text Dr. Fern treats in his whole twentieth section. The substance is, that the Roman church is but part of the catholic church; and so, though the gates of Hell had prevailed against her, yet they had not prevailed against the catholic church. Yet says he, we acknowledge that Hell gates did not prevail a

gainst

gainst the church of Rome, to a subversion of the faith in it, or a total infection of the members of it, with all the errors and superstitions that prevailed in it.

2. Although it be not to my purpose (as long as I continue still in a general fearch after fome infallible church) to pass to that particular inquiry, whether this church be the Roman or no (of which afterward;) yet because this prime objection may be best folved in this place; I answer, that neither Dr. Fern, nor any other Doctor, can find out upon Earth, such a church, different from the Roman, as has been promifed in the texts of the former chapter, to which all nations were to flow, to which kings and princes were to minister, whose gates should be open night and day, whose Sun should never fet, &c. For by the Roman church, we do not understand the particular diocess of Rome; but we understand all fuch 'churches as are joined in communion to the Roman, as members to their head. Had Hell gates prevailed against all such churches, where (I pray) had there upon Earth been found any one fingle church, against which church, Hell had not more prevailed, than against the Roman? name but one, and I am fatisfied. But that one must be shewed to have been perpetually conspicuous, to which all nations might flow, having kings and potentates of the Earth, ministers unto her; in-so much, that the nations which would not serve her (as the nations joined to the Roman communion would not) should perish. That church must have these and such o ther qualities, expressed by scripture in my precedent fection. Knowing you could not find any church upon Earth so qualified, but the Roman, which taken (as we usually take it) comprehends the churches of all nations joined in communion unto her, you are forced to to qualify your centue

k

(

t

th

be

it.

ed

23

n-

ch

ay

er

p-

m,

19

ch

tes

16-

do

out

in

eir

ch

th

ch

nft

ed.

pe-

ght

mI-

Ons

ned

pe-

0.

re-

any

an,

nes

non

lute

of her errors prevailing in her, that you fay, they prevailed not to a total infection of the members of it, with all the errors and superstions that prevailed in it. How come you to know this, if it be not upon record, that some considerable quantity of men in all ages (sufficient to constitute such a church, as we have seen Christs true church must be) did not affent to all that was defined by the Roman church, nor to other errors as great as hers, but kept themselves to that which you call the pure doctrine of Christ: if this be not upon record (as I was faying) then you fay you know not what: if it be upon record, begin to tell me who these men were, in that second, third, fourth, fifth, fixth age after popery, against whom, these errors prevailed not; and I will trouble you with no fur-You can as ther examination of your records. well eat a whole mill-stone to breakfast, as prove any fuch thing by any records.

5. But you fay the fathers interpreted this promile, of the gates of Hell not prevailing against the church, of the not failing of the church, and never of the not erring of it. Those who object this, mark not that the chief way of failing, is to fail by erring. How did the church fail in the dominions of the Arians, was it not by erring; and so of all dominions corrupted by herefy. So also the whole visible church had failed, if the whole visible church had proposed any error to be believed for a point of faith; for to do this, is to propose a lie, as upheld by divine authority; which is to fall no less foully, than he should fall, who should teach God to be an affirmer and confirmer of lies. whatfoever point any church held as a point of their faith, they held it as a divine verity, affirmed and revealed by God: therefore if in any age, the visible church held any error for a point of faith, it did fail most miserably: and yet your protestant doctors generally teach, that the only visible church, did teach several errors as points of faith. So Dr. Fern accuseth, even the primitive church, of teaching the millenary belief, and infants communion, though most falsly; as our Doctors often have shewed: thus they throw dirt upon Christs unspotted spouse. And as the black Etheopians painted their Gods black; so your foully erroneous church would have all churches to have been foully erroneous; as you would have, even the purest church to have been, had she proposed these two gross errors for divine verities, as

you fay she did.

7. Yet to make a shew of something like a church, Dr. Fern says, the gates of Hell may prevail, not to the overthrowing of the fundamental faving faith; but to superstruction of bay, stubble and worse, I mean errors in belief and practice; yet fuch as may still be convinced by the doctrine of faving faith, still preserved in the church. With these superstructions, you charge the Roman church; yet adding, that she bas the fundamental faith in express terms, delivered down in ber, and such saving knowledge as was sufficient to discern the foundation from the superstructures. All this is confidently faid by you; but still (like yourself) you end the matter, and offer no kind of proof: neither do you add any one syllable to fatisfy the great difficulties which occur in this confident affertion, against which I have something to say: first, to assume fuch liberty to our private felves, of limiting that which the Holy Ghost shought not fit to limit; is to teach others to limit fuch texts as promise divine affistance to scripture writers, and to the apostles, fo, as to fay in like manner, that they shall deliver nothing against the fundamental faving faith, but yet, that they may super-add a vast multitude of their own private fancies. Secondly, you canu

n

cl

pr

m

fa

fa

TO

ne

th

me

ab

YO

ore

ly,

you

gre bel

the

dan

to a

take

It is

top

tanc

Ö

.

H

-

d

t

1-

h

1;

8

71

e

U

es

A

10

at

15

ne

S,

1-

h,

de

not

not name a perpetual visible church, which Christ had upon earth, against which, this error (for so you call it) did not prevail of admitting for an infallible truth, whatfoever was proposed by the church. Of this error (if it be one) you can affign no beginning in the Roman church (nor in any other catholic church.) But this error is a fundamental error, not only because it lays the foundation, upon which, infinite errors must be built; but chiefly, because it admits of no other ground, upon which to found any divine faith, for it admits of scripture itself upon this only ground, see feet. 20. N. 5. If this ground be an error, the foundation of all the faith that is in the Roman church, is an error, and an error fundamental, as properly as you can prove any error to be fundamental: for it makes the foundation of all our faith to be an error. Have you as good ground to fay (as you do feet. 6.) The Arian herefy is an error directly fundamental? wherefore you must needs fay, that the gates of Hell prevailed against the Roman church to the overthrow of fundamental faving faith. And then you will never be able to find Chrift a true visible church, by which you received your doctrine, your mission, your ordination, your fuccession from the apostles; for these you had not from the Greek church. Thirdly, As I just now urged, every church, to which you dare affirm the name of catholic to have agreed, did teach all the articles she proposed to be believed as divine verities revealed by God; even the Greek church did this. But now, as it is damnable, even in matters of fmallest importance, to affirm with an oath any lie (because we should take God for a witness and affertor of our lie;) fo It is a most damnable thing to all those churches, to propose errors even in matters of smallest imporlance for articles of their faith, to be believed as

Office La

divine verities, revealed, and affirmed, and confirmed by God. If the Roman church, as well as all the rest, did this (as you must say she did) she was no church, but a synagogue of Satan, because she proposed lies to be believed equally to divine verities, and thus did make the spirit of truth, to be the father of her lies: wherefore you must needs fay, the gates of hell prevailed against her fufficiently, to bring her (and those who followed her doctrine) to Hell. But when, not only the Roman, but also all other churches for the last thousand years did this, where will you find Corift such a church as scriptures promise? from which church you did receive your doctrine, your mission, 'your ordination, your succession to the apostles. Fourthly, neither you, nor any of yours, can tell (with any certainty) which be those particular points by the belief of which the faving faith is preserved, for that, if all those points be held, this faith is held intirely; if they be not all held, she is lost. How blindly then do you proceed, when you affirm, that the gates of Hell prevailed not to the overthrow of fundamental faving faith; which is more than you can know, unless you can tell in the belief of which particular points this fundamental faith confifts? do you think this was done by preserving still in her such knowledge as was sufficient to difcern the foundation from the superstructure? If this be enough, then Arianism, or any other herely, preserving the scriptures, and not having sufficient force to abolish the knowledge of principles, by which they may be reclaimed, may be faid not to have erred in fundamental faving faith: for you fay, that in the scripture all fundamental points are clearly fet down.

8. Now give me leave to urge the force of my text; God buildeth upon a rock (a full expression of greatest security) not any church, but that very

church

ch

pr

pr

ch

ha

ea

ch Ai

ta

pr

da

Ci

mi

th

(a

ye

W

pu

th

tb

th

ou

m

ev

w

the

of

Ca

all

fre

w

fef

bui

for

one

the

n-

as

he

ife

ne

to

ds

CI-

er

n.

nd

ch

ur

th-

th

by

fo

eld

W

m,

w

an

of

n-

ng

if-

his

fy,

ent

by

to

OU

nts

my

on

ery rch

church described in my former section out of the prophets: and fo all that has been faid of that church, must be verified of this; with a reiterated promise, that the gates of bell shall not prevail against it; without breach of which promise this church could not have erred so notoriously, as I have shewed you affirm all churches visible upon earth, to have erred; and particularly the Roman church uses to be stiled by yours, idolatrous, superfitious, the feat of Antichrift, the synagogue of Satan, a nest of errors, covered with an universal leprofy, overwhelmed with more than Cymerian darkness, averted by apostacy from the whole body of Christ. This is the character you give of the Roman church: and then, when we press you with this and other clear texts; you for your own ends; lay, the Roman church erred not fundamentally; yet your famous french brother John Daille, whose book of schism has been now twice or thrice published in England, in express terms chargeth the Roman church with fundamental errors overthrowing the foundations of christianity, C. 7. And then in the next chapter, he begins to shew how our opinion of adoring the Eucharist is a fundamenmental error; in the proving whereof, he labours even until his nineteenth chapter, the title of which, is, that there be very many other beliefs in the church of Rome which overthrow the foundation of our faith. And indeed, he is the true disciple of Calvin, who inflit. 4. c. 18. fays of us, they made all the kings and the people of the Earth drunk, from the first to the last. Add now to this, that which Dr. Whitaker controv. 4. 2.5. C. 3. confesseth in these words, in times past no religion but the Papistical bad place in the church. Therefore (fay I) if this Papistical church was such an one as yours describes it; and if there were no other church but this, the gates of Hell prevailed a-

gainst all churches upon the earth. And indeed the very claim which this church makes to infallibilia ty, and her conformably preffing all the world to fubmit to her definitions, and hold them for divine oracles (if they be errors) is the very bane of christendom, as Dr. Fern calls it, Sect 27. For upon this principle the may oblige all to hold your church (which you will fay is Chrifts pureft church) not to be any church at all, but a damnable congregation of heretics. How then have not the gates of hell prevailed against her, who teached the purest church to teach most damnable heresyl and again, if Hell gates have prevailed against her against what church did they not, for a thousand years before Luther, prevail? fo much of this

9. My eighth text, to prove the church to be our infallible judge, secured by God from leading us into any error, great or little, is Mat. 18. 17. be that will not bear the church, let bim be unn thee as a publican or beathen: therefore, meerly for not bearing the church, a man, according to the true judgment of God himself, is to be held (and consequently does justly deserve to be held) asa publican or heathen: but all men are obliged not to do that, by which fo heavy a judgment may defervedly fall upon them: therefore all men are obliged to hear the church; the meerly not hearing of her, deferving to heavy a judgment, evening the fight of God; who faith in the next verie, that the churches judgment (condemning those who refuse to hear her) shall be made good, and approved of in Heaven. No man therefore is fecure in conscience, or innocent in the fight of God, who refuseth to hear, or obey the church. Hence follows, firft, that this church cannot err damnably, for so a man in conscience might be bound to follow a damnable error. Secondly, hence follows, 11(B) 3 3

that

th

to fo

fit

th

G

fir

ch

art WE

litt

col

chi

gre

he

WO. wo

err roi

wa

or 1

ho

or h

his

chu

mat

which

ula

ore

he

affe

hat

oun Fiva

ar pi

ng a

he 1

that the cannot err in any small matter belonging to faith; for all men being bound to hear her, and follow that which the teaches; and it being imposfible any man should in conscience be bound to hold the least falsity as an article of faith revealed by God (for that were to hold God a revealer or affirmer of a lie) it follows, that it is impossible the church should ever deliver any small error for an article of faith. In hearing and obeying the church we follow Gods command: but no kind of error little or great can be incurred by following Gods command; therefore in hearing and obeying the church we can be led into no kind of error little or great.

the

nilia

to

ine

rif-

noc

out

chl

on-

the

eih

v!

er,

nd

his

be

RE

17.

nto

rly

he

nd

5 2

ot

le-

e

11-

in

le,

ne

nd

e.

d.

ce

2-

to

VS,

nat

10. Now if any one reply, that we are to hear the church, so long as the swarveth not from Gods word. My answer is, that to swarve from Gods word is to err: but this text proves she cannot err; therefore this text proveth the cannot swarve rom Gods word. And indeed, if she could err, or swarve from Gods word, the meerly not hearing, or not obeying her, could not deserve that a man hould be justly accounted by God as a publican, brheathen. See here, N. 19. Others reply, that his text is to be understood, not of hearing this thurch in matters of faith and unbelief, but of natters of trespass between brother and brother. which trespasses are also to be told to every partiular church, and to several prelates; and thereore this place makes nothing for the authority of he universal church. I answer, particular tresaffes are to be referred to particular prelates; and hat the church is not to be affembled in a general ouncil for every private mans trespass. Singular rivate men are to be condemned by their particuar prelates of their particular churches, proceedng according to the known decrees and orders of he universal church. If any man, when they proceed

n

2

0

t

h

W

15

C

0

a

W

al

n

t

tl

le

h

d

fi

di

it

01

ck

al

de

W

fa

W

fa

ve

lp

proceed thus, disobeys them, he in them disobeys the universal church; according to whose known laws, and decrees, these prelates clearly proceed And therefore he, meerly for this only act of refractory disobedience to the church, deserves, by Gods own judgment, to be accounted as a publican or heathen. So we see, that every man, who disobeys the particular judges, judging clearly according to the known laws of the common-wealth, disobeys the common-wealth. And it is this refractory disobeying, and not hearing the church, which makes the crime fo enormous: for this teacheth others to do the like; and so all government falls to confusion, all order to disorder. Whence you may eafily see, that the not obeying and following particular prelates, in fo well ordered a common-wealth as the church is, does commonly come to be the very felf fame enormous crime of not hearing the church. And because all particular prelates of the church are supposed (if the contrary be not notorious) to do their duty in giving fentence according to the known decrees, orders, and canons of the universal church, those who disobey the prelates of particular churches, must (by no less general a manner of speaking) be faid to disobey the universal church; as those, who disobey the judge, are faid to disobey the common-wealth. So that at last, this disobedience against the church, is against Christ and God himfelf, according to that which God faid to Samuel, Lib. 1. c. 8. They bave not rejected thee, but they bave rejected me: and Christ to his disciples, the first prelates of the church; be that despiseth you, despiseth me, Luk. 10. whence you did fee sect. 8. N. 6. how St. Austin taught us, that if there were a man appointed by God to be heard by us (and known to be fo commissioned) no body would date to refuse obedience unto him in what he taugh!;

eys

Wn

ed.

fe-

by

bli.

ho

ac-

th,

re-

ch,

his

rn-

er.

ing

er-

m-

ous

all

(if

in

es,

ofe

es,

be

ile,

m.

nce

m-

iel,

bey

the

gu,

8.

ere

ind

uld

he

1!:

taught; lest so doing, he should be truly judged. not so much to have refused obedience to this man. as to have refused it to God, who gave commission to this man. Just so (as St. Austin also discourfeth) being it is God who gave this commission to the church, obliging all to hear her, with fo strict a command, that the refusers are to be judged, by his express order, as publicans and heathens, he who refuseth to submit to this church, for doing so is truly judged not so much to disobey the church. as to disobey God who gave the commission to the church: see feet. 22. N 5. And therefore Christ commanded the lawful successors of Moles to be obeyed, in what they commanded (to wit, either by public authority, or by the known doctrine or practice formerly ordered by public authority;) although these successors of Moses were men, not wicked in their lives, but also did (on their private authority) teach errors, and that publickly; yet never authorized by any one public definition of the feat of Moses. And they were these never-authorifed errors of theirs, which Christ called the leaven of the Pharifees, bidding his apostles take heed of it. But now, for as much as concerns the doctrine, which was authorised by the public definition of that feat, Christ was so far from bidding, even the common people, to take heed of it, that he faid publickly, to the whole promiscuous multitude, and also to bis disciples; upon the chair of Moses bave fitten the Scribes and Pharisees; all therefore what soever they bid you, observe, and do, Matt. 23. v. 1. Note those most ample words (All therefore what soever.) O! will you fay, what if they bid us do against the scripture; what must you do? I answer, that just as you must fay concerning that voice, which came from heaven, commanding (Matt. 17.) to bear our Saviour, lpsum audite, was not to be eluded by the Pharifees

t

í

h

e

V

k

C

d

re

ei

Ca

to

fp

as

W

 I_{i}

br

to

m

dr

pr

hi

m

сті

th

pre

ful

de

Ar

thi

fees saying, Hear bim if be teach no falsity; but was a declaration from heaven, that be, who was so universally to be heard, should be secured from teaching any falsity; see seed. 22. N. 5. So also these words, all therefore whatsoever. And these words of the text I am now urging, if any man will not hear the church, &c. be words containing a declaration made by our Saviours own mouth, that the old and shew church so universally commanded to be heard, were secured from teaching any falsity. And I shall answer, before I end all your chief ob.

jections to the contrary, feet. 23.

11. Now as the fynagogues authority was to he heard in all what seever they did bid in matter of doctrine, and not only in points of trespasses between brother, and brother; we cannot (without notably depressing the authority of Christs church, and casting it under the synagogues) allow to the fynagogue a power to be univerfally heard in all what soever, and yet confine the authority of Christia church to those narrow limits of being heard only in point of trespass between brother and brother, whereas the fynagogue is but the handmaid, the church the fovereign lady, and bas a better covenant established upon better promises, Heb. 8.6. The force then of my text is this, If any one will not bear the church, even in trespass between brother and brother belonging to her court, let bim be accounted as a publican or beathen; and much more, let him be fo accounted if he will not hear the church in such trespasses which one brother commits against all his brothers, and against his dearest mother the church; this being incomparibly a crime more heinous, and more particularly belonging to the court of the church, over which crime if God had not given her power, he had not given her sufficient power for her own preservation, as every commonwealth has, and of necessity mult

out

· fo

cb-

efe

rds

not

la.

the

to

ty.

ob.

he

of

he-

out

ch,

the

all

ifs

nly

er,

the

ישניי

6.

will

TO-

2 be

ore,

the

·m·

reft

y 2

be-

ich

not

ati-

ffity

null

must have, especially so ample a commonwealth. as was intended to be dilated over the whole face of the earth, and to be established in a vast extent for Wherefore as our adverfaries use to fay. that every kingdom or Commonwealth must needs have power to make laws and statutes, of sufficient efficacy to keep off all foreign juris which it may be ruined, because as well (lib. 3. de Primat. Pont. C. 1. N. . Duman Nature cannot be destitute of necessary remedies to its own preservation; so we say God having erected a kingdom to stand for ever, as Daniel called his church (of which I spoke the last Sect. N. 9.) he cannot but be supposed to have given this his kingdom, or church that ecclesiastical power which was requifite to preferve it from all fecular infurrections, against the ecclesiastical or spiritual power thereof; or else it might easily be quitted and cast off by them all. This kingdom then, being to reign in the middle of all nations, he gave it a spiritual jurisdiction over all nations, in so much as he faid to his church, the nation and kingdom which will not serve thee, shall perish; of which Ispoke more the last feet. N. 8. Whosoever than broacheth any herefy, as a poisoned cup prepared to the ruin, not of one brothers body, but of as many brothers fouls as he can any way intice to drink thereof: if he still perfists in this malicious practice, and so, to the notorious trespassing of all his brethren, and dearest mother, continues committing this foul-murthering crime of herefy (a crime the most destructive of the common good that can be thought of) he is questionless to be proceeded against by the church, to which if he submit not, he, most deservedly, in the highest degree, is to be counted a Publican or Heathen. And note, that all Heretics are not only guilty of this foul-murthering crime of herefy, but by stand-

ing out against the prelates of the church, in the maintaining of their herefy, they fall into schifm; which crime of its own nature (as St. Thomas affirms) is the most heinous trespals against our brothers, and against the most solemn band of fraternal charity, that can be committed. If thereagainst our brethren belong to the course thurch, and she is here by God made the judged seof, with that high prerogative of having her sentence ratified in Heaven, then doubtless those whom she condemns are condemned persons, both in the fight of God and men. She therefore, under so great a penalty, being to be heard, is secured from all kind of error in her fentence, or decree. And as the broaching of herefy, and the standing out in defence of it by schism, is incomparably more destructive to our brethren, and offensive to our mother the church. when this is done by a great multitude, or a whole nation; fo in this case, the crime more neerly concerns the court of the church, and she is impowered to pass sentence against it; which being no less, but rather more just, than in the former case, will no less, but rather more assuredly, be ratified in Heaven. I note this for Dr. Fern's sake, who, under pretence of reformation, licenfeth a whole nation to stand out against all other churches, fect. 4.

ti

ti

fo

3

to

fe

in

no

la

th

no

w

cet

be

ten

lure

(which some inconsiderately use, to elude the force of this text,) that this sentence of the church consists only in an exterior excommunication, in which she may err, and the party (erroneously excommunicated) may be a just man in the sight of God. I answer, if we deceive not ourselves by putting a case different from that which concerns the true understanding of this text, the matter will soon be cleared. This text speaks of one who will not hear,

13. That

nor submit to the church, after she has given fentence against him: give me a man who in this case, does not submit to the church, and this very not submission of his, cannot but be that very crime, for which Christ himself holds him accountable as a Publican or Heathen, and affirms that this sentence shall be ratified in Heaven: wherefore it is impossible this censure should be unjust, if he be truly guilty of not hearing the church. It is true, that by false information, or some such way, a man may be judged to be guilty of not hearing the church, when really in the fight of God he is not guilty: and fo there may fometimes be an error in the mistake of the fact; and thus Clave errante, by an error only in matter of fact (in which the church is not infallible,) the fentence will not be ratified in heaven. But this is nothing to the purpose of our adversaries, who would have a man be innocent in the fight of God, who professes in many particulars not to conform to what the fentence of the church commands all to conform; for example, to adore the facred Eucharift. &c. Every man who professes this, professes net to hear the sentence of the church, which is still by severe censures pressing it upon him. Wherefore in pronouncing sentence here (where the fact of not hearing the church is maintained as good and laudable,) there can be no error in the fact; for they confess and profess that here they neither do, nor will hear the church, against which they (with Dr. Fern, fect. 10.) fay, they have evidence of scripture, demonstration of reason, and a conformable consent of primitive times, the pure ages of the church. Wherefore when the church pronounceth these persons, so notoriously refractory, to be accounted as Publicans, or Heathens, her fentence shall be ratified in Heaven, and either scripture must be falle, or those men guilty. L 2

1

2

e:

e.

٢,

70

13. That all may clearly fee what an empty boast this is, which Dr. Fern, and others make of their having evidence of scripture against what our church teacheth; I challenge him, or any other, to shew, if he can, by scripture only (for that you all make your judge) that the texts which here! alledge for the church her being our infallible judge, cannot be interpreted truly, as our church fays they are to be interpreted. For to shew this it is not enough for you to devise some different interpretation, in which it is possible for these texts to be taken: for it is no proof to fay, this may be the true interpretation, therefore it is fo: or, it feems probably to be fo, therefore evidently this, and no other but this interpretation is true: but you must, (and that by evidence of scripture only) shew that these texts cannot be truly interpreted, as our church interprets them; and you must prove by scripture only, that the tradition, by which the has received these interpretations, is not a true tradition descended from the apostles. For if it be a true tradition (the contrary to which can never be evidently demonstrated out of scripture alone the is grounded as well as those who received their doctrine from scripture only. For the tongues of the apostles were as infallible as their pens; and what they faid, and caused to be reduced to practice all the world over, is far less subject, to be either counterfeited, or mistaken, than their writings. You also will never answer what I said, that these texts, which now I am bringing for this point, be as clear evidences out of scripture for the churches being our infallible judge, as those other texts brought by you, and examined here by me, fed. 10. be clear evidences to demonstrate that scrip ture only is to be our judge; which point, if you cannot make more evident out of scripture than make this point, it is manifest, that you stand out agains

15

F

te

eı

in

PI

tr

be

pty

of

OUT

to

ou

e l

ble

ch

118,

in-

xts

be

11

and

7OU

ew

our

by

the

rue

be

ver

nel

leif

ot

and

tice

her

ngs.

ele

be

ch-

XIS

eA.

rip-

YOU

n

out

against alt the prelates of all the churches under which you lived before your division, without convincing them by evidence of scripture that you might and ought refuse submission to them. The church then being in possession of her authority over you, and not manifestly convinced by you with any evidence of scripture (of the evidence of which there is far more reason she should be judge, than you) you, for not hearing her, are by her just sentence denounced to be held as Publicans or Heathens, and this sentence is ratisfied in Heaven.

14 My ninth text, to prove the church infallible in her definitions and judgments, is out of St. Paul I Tim. 3. calling her the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. not all securely rely in their faith upon the very pillar of truth? may they not, most groundedly, ground their faith upon the very ground of truth itself? what do we say more? now I pray, what possibility can there be for you to shew by evident scripture, that this text is not capable of this interpretation, which our church gives unto it? in place of shewing this (which only makes to the purpose:) you go about to shew that text may bave other interpretations, therefore (you infer) this is not the true one, which is a pitiful argument. For what text was ever cited by St. Paul, or other apostles, which might not have had some other interpretation put upon it? thus in place of bringing evident scripture against us, you still bring your own interpretations of it, as if scripture (fallibly interpreted by you) were to be our judge. What text have you for that? if you fay, scripture interpreted truly, must be our judge; but you do interpret it truly; therefore scripture, as you interpret it, must be our judge; what Heretic will not fay thus much tor his damnable interpretations? tell me then, what .

what interpretation can be demonstrated to be the only true one, which is different from our interpretation, which faith thus: the church being the pillar itself of truth, we may, without fear of ever erring, rely upon her? the being the very ground of truth itself; we are securely grounded, as long as we are grounded on her authority. What have you in fcripture only, to prove this interpretation to be manifeftly false, as you must prove it against lo public authority? what (I fay) have you out of scripture only, to demonstrate this? nothing, but in place of bringing us evidence of scripture, lo vainly boafted of, you bring us for your best anfwer, an interpretation of your own, which you fay must be true, because perhaps it may be true; as if I should sufficiently prove that A. B. must be a thief, because perhaps he may be so. To answer in the like form, I may as well fay, this interpretation of yours must be false; because perhaps it may be false. But let us hear what your best interpretation is. You commonly fay, there is a double pillar, and a double ground: one pillar, or ground which is principal, and that is the fcripture; an other pillar or ground subordinate to the former, and that is the church. But this double dealing in distinguishing, helps you not. church must still be a true pillar and a true ground of the truth. The people believed God and Moses, faith the scripture, Ex. 14. v. 31. Moses was infinitely under God, and subordinate to him, as the church is under scripture and subordinate to it; and yet this did not hinder but that all the people did most truly believe Moses, and ground their faith on what he faid; because they knew he had received what he taught, from God. So all the fubordination the church has to scripture, does not hinder, but that we may truly rely in our belief upon the church as the people relied upon Moses, becaule

he

1-

er

nd

ng

ve

to

of

ut

n-

Ou

e; be

rer l

re-

it in-

2

or ip-

the

ble

he

nd

les,

10-

25

to

eo-

had

the

not

lief

les,

ule

because we also know that what the church teacheth, the has received from God by Chrift, and his apostles. Again, the tradition or doctrine of our church is as secure, as the tradition or doctrine of the church in the law of nature was for all those two thousand years which were before all scripture; but then men might (and all did) fecurely rely on that church as the pillar and ground of truth, on which all their faith relied: Ergo they may now thus rely on Christs church. Again, what clear text have you to prove, that Christs church is less secured from falsity, than that church? had not this ground been fure enough (as it had not if that church had been fallible) the faith of all the world, could not have been grounded fufficiently upon it: and that which is most to our purpose, at that very time in which St. Paul did call the church the pillar and ground of the truth; he did call her so before the canon of the scripture was finished, before which time, you yourselves confess the church might be, and was fecurely relied upon, in all points of faith; and no one christian can, by any text, be proved to have then understood St. Paul to speak these words of the church, as of a pillar and ground of truth subordinate to the canon of scripture when it should be finished. How then comes this now to be the only true sense of scripture? what text have you to prove (and that demonstratively) that the church of Christ, which, before any word of the new testament was written, was the pillar and ground of truth, and that so universally, that she was fecuted from proposing any error to be believed. were it great or little; but yet she, immediately upon the writing of the scripture (confirming this title unto her) became less univerfally a pillar and ground of truth, and more subject to error than before? you, who will have nothing of moment

held without clear scripture, shew but one single clear text of scripture for this. More again of

this Sea. 16. in the beginning N. 1, 2, 3.

15. Another shift to elude the force of my text. is, to fay, that by these words St. Paul intended only to fet forth the office of the church, and not her authority. For God's fake mark how you handle scripture against us. You say you will bring evident demonstration of scripture, and now you bring your meer conjectures of St. Paul's inward and fecret intention, known to God only. Let me then ask you, what text tells you clearly that St. Paul had only an intention to fet forth the churches office, and not her authority? whereas, in fewer words, I think it scarce possible more fully, and more emphatically, to fet forth her infallible authority, than by terming her the pillar and ground of truth; which words firike fo firong upon our understanding, even at the first hearing of them, that the first consequence we can make from hence is; therefore upon this pillar of truth we may securely rely in our belief of truth; therefore upon this ground of truth we may fafely ground our belief. Concerning the office of this church no man thinks, until he be put in mind, or hath turned a while his understanding to the search of several interpretations. St. Paul then using words as fufficient to declare the infallible authority of the church, as men in ordinary speech use to do, yea, using a most expressive metaphor, which comes fully home to this intent, what do you but tell us your bare conjectures (and those most weakly grounded) when you tell us, you know his intention was not to declare the authority of the church. Some prove this weak conjecture by another weaker: for they fay, to what purpose was it for St. Poul instructing Timothy, how to behave himself in the church of God, to set forth unto him her infallible

tle

of

ct,

ed

ot

Du

ill

W

n-

y.

ly

re

5,

re

1-

77

ıg

g

e

b

d

ħ

1.

8

t.

T

e

infallible authority? I answer, that it was not only much to the purpose to instruct all posterity in one of the most necessary points, but also it was most pertinent to that particular end of moving Timothy to behave himself irreprehensibly in the church, because she was constituted the public oracle for all the world, that all in all ages might come to her for secure direction in their faith, and for affured decision of all their controversies (she being a pillar and ground of truth) St. Paul thought fit to admonish Timothy, and all other prelates in his person, so to behave themselves, as not, by their mildemeanor, to make men think it improbable that God should give a perpetual infallible assistance to such a church, whose prime and first governors (who should be the patern of the rest) lived scandalously or less Godly. How much do, (not your multitude only) but even your greatest doctors, think themselves to say against the church of Rome, claiming this infallibility (yet improbably fay you;) because her prelates have been avaritious, cruel, lascivious, or otherwise seandalous? this indeed is a pitiful argument, for fo it should be proved improbable that God affifted infallibly wicked men to write (without the least error) fome parts of the holy scripture. And yet we know David was both an adulterer and murderer; Solomon was an idolater, who went after Astoroth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Michom the abomination of the Amonites, I Kings II. v. 5, 7. Of divers books we know not the authors, and fo we cannot tell whether they were good or bad: Yet as pitiful an argument as this is, we know it troubles weak fouls; and therefore you use it against us. Wherefore, to take away all scandal from these little ones, it was very convenient that bishops, especially those who first held that place in the church (as Timothy did) should be blamele's, L 5

For such good precepts as these were here given by St. Paul, as much making to his purpose; to maintain the credit of such a church as might seem to all, sit to be that which indeed was constituted by the public oracle of the world, the pillar

and ground of truth.

16. My tenth text is out of the last words of St. Matthew, go you therefore, and teach all nations. baptifing them, &c. and lo I am with you always, even to the end of the world. The apostles, in their own persons, were not to be here teaching and baptifing until the end of the world : therefore, not only according to St. Austin and St. Hierom upon this place, but also according to manifelt reason, these words were spoken as a promise both to them and to their successors for ever, by whom they were for ever to be teaching all nations, and baptifing; and confequently, this promife was made to the affembly of teachers, doctors, and bishops of that visible church, in which they were visibly to perform all that belonged to the instruction of all nations unto the worlds end. That church which had no fuch visible being in all. ages, hath no share in this promise; for who is not the party to which the promise is made, has no part in the promise. You then, having no share in it, enviously labour to lessen it, by faying, that it is not to be understood that there should be equality of affiftance in all ages, securing the church at all times, from all error in every age, as the was fecured in the first age; when the was governed by the apostles: and after they had written the scriptures, there was no further need of any other infallible rule; a lesser assistance therefore might serve after ages. I answer, that this is only to tell me what you think might be faid: but where is your evidence of scripture, to demonftrate,

h

ſ

a

W

to

th

to

D.

nu

pa

c.

en

e ;

ht

i-

ar

u,

Vs,

m

ng

e-

ie-

eft

th

m

nd

725

nd

ey

he

nd.

all

15

125

no

ng,

be the

ge,

vas

rit-

of

re-

18

out

ite,

strate, that the affistance God promised was indeed extended to infallibility in the first age; but was not fo in any other age? I ask for infallible texts, and not for fallible reasons: though I must tell you, that according to reason, after the first age (when the church was now grown from a grain of mustard-feed to be a vast tree, extending her branches from fea to fea, and fill growing to a greater extent) in process of following ages, there must needs, in so huge a compass of the world imbracing men of different understandings, dictaments, principles, educations, instructions, humours, and wills; there must (I say) needs happen in the progress of many ages (still removed further, and further from Christs time, and the days of the apostles) a world of doubts, debates and controversies, some affirming such and such books to belong to the true canon of scripture; others rejecting them as Apocrypha. Some affirming fuch and fuch copies to be the only true uncorrupted copies of those books; others affirming those to be corrupted, and others different from them to be the only true ones. And again, after they had agreed upon the true books, and the true copies (though perhaps they might in that agree in a fundamental error) yet they would be fure mainly to disagree about the true sense of those. copies. Why then might not Chrift, to secure his church from erring in so important controverhes (undecidable by scripture,) promise also an affiltance extended to infallibility in latter ages, as well as in the first age? for infallibility was given to the apostles, not for their own sakes, but for the good of those whom they were to teach, and to secure them from error. Now the christian people of after ages were incomparably more in number, and their very number made them incomparably more subject (in process of many ages stall remoter

remoter from Christ) to be led into inextricable errors; wherefore furely they did exceedingly need this infallible affistance, given, as I said, for the peoples fake. Those who had been instructed by the apostles, before scripture was written, converted and instructed thousands, who never had heard any apostle preach: all these believed upon the authority of the then present church, and their faith was infallible; therefore that church, which was then before scripture, had an infallible affiftance to fecure her from proposing any error. What scripture tells you she lost this affistance when scripture was written? and that men could not rely upon her authority, when now, besides the help of tradition, she had also the help of scripture to rule herfelf by? fee this more fully, S. 16. N. 2. You say, this infallible affistance was less necessary for her after she had received the scripture. I might say, it was more necessary; Because in process of time Heretics would arise, who would affirm the scriptures to have been purposely written to be our sole and only rule of faith; and this they would fay of scripture as interpreted by them, and not as interpreted by any infallible, visible interpreter. This herefy, into which all Heretics have ever fallen, makes the necessity of an infallible affistance greater after the writing of scripture, than it was before. Again, what scripture tells you that God is fo sparing in his providing means for the direction of his church, that, giving them scripture, he will fubtract his affiftance formerly extended to infallibility, and not leave them, with their Bibles in their hands, to go which way every one in his private judgment shall think fittest, without the former direction of a public, visible, and infallible guide? had we not better have kept such a guide still? Dr. Fern could not but acknowledge, that fuch a visible, infallible judge,

judge, or umpire of all christendom, would (if to be bad) be a ready means to compose all differences, and restore truth and peace, S. 27. The church was this infallible, visible judge before scripture was written; and it is also confessed, that such a judge would now, after we have the scripture, be an exceeding benefit; why then do you fay, God took away this inestimable gift from his church with one hand, when he gave the scripture with the other; there not being the least text in scripture for fo important an affertion? I think any one would hold it most rash to say, that St. John the Evangelist, after he had writ the last words of the whole canon or fcripture, prefently loft his infallibility in teaching, instructing, guiding, interpreting, &c. why then should the whole church of Christ lose that infallibility which confessedly she had before the canon was quite finished? again, you cannot fay the scripture was superfluously written, though the church, before the writing thereof, was an infallible guide: how then can you fay the infallible guidance of the church is fuperfluous, after the writing of the scripture; efpecially, being fuch an infallible guidance is even now confessed to be so ready a means to end all controversies; which among those who admit no fuch guides, are endless? see also my next feet. N. 1, 2, 3. Christ therefore, not only in the first age, but even to the confummation of the world. is with his church; but he is not with those who introduce, and father upon him, as the first revealer thereof, many gross and intolerable errors and superstitions, as you call those which you found in all churches upon the face of the Earth, this last thousand years: therefore these last thoufand years he was not with his church, or elfe her errors were not fuch as needed fo fad a reformation as yours was, to the disturbance of all Christendom.

h

P

te

p

(

t

g

P

1

a

1

e

t

r

I

tendom. If her errors were tolerable, they should (to avoid so great mischiefs) have been tolerated; if they were intolerable, how was Christ with her? or what other church can you name, whose errors were not as intolerable? now that all may clearly see, that this promise of Christ assured the church of an assistance extended to an infallible security from all error fundamental, or not sundamental; this will appear by that farther, and sulfer explication made of this promise in St. John, who writ on purpose to explicate more sully some points, less fully set down by the former evangelists.

17. My eleventh text is out of St. John, where C. 14. v. 15. our Saviour faith, I will pray the father and he will give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive. And v. 27. The comforter which is the Holy Ghost whom the Father will fend in my name, be shall teach you all things, and fuggest unto you all things what soever I shall far unto you (fundamental or not fundamental.) And C. 16. v. 12. I have yet many things to fay unto you (the fundamentals be not many things, as you all confess;) Howbeit, when the spirit of truth is come, be will guide you into all truth, not only fundamental, but also not fundamental, which belong to those many things which I (who have told you things fundamental) have not yet told you. In these things this Spirit will guide you into all truth. But all truth excludes all errors, not only in fundamental, but also in not-fundamental points. You know not which points be fundamental, which not; which destructive of salvation, which not; which curable, which incurable: yet feat not; believe the church in teaching these, or any other points; for she, guided by this spirit of truth, will guide you into all truth. But you will fay, how,

d

e

le

5,

27

nd

211

2-

ng

DU

In

tb.

n-

ts.

al,

ch

ny

th,

ay,

how long shall her chief pastors have this great priviledge? For ever, faith the first part of my text; by which words it is made evident that the promise was made, not only to them for themselves (they not being to live for ever teaching us these truths;) but also for their successors in the prime government of the church, who were to guide the people into all truth for ever; as I shall presently thew farther out of St. Paul. I argue hence (just as I did before;) this affiftance which was promifed for ever, was ever, and in all ages, performed; therefore in those ten ages (which made the thousand years before your reformation) this promife was performed; therefore what all the prime Prelates of the church did teach all that while for truth, was not erroneous, or superstitious: but in all these ages they all confessedly did teach for truth those very points, which you hold to be our groffest errors; therefore these be not errors, but truth. Here you fee again clearly, why this great promise cannot belong to your prelates or other governors of your church, as it is different from ours. First, because you had no visible governors at all of your church as diffinct from ours. For governors must needs be visibly chosen, have visible subjects, send forth visible decrees, &c. Name fuch governors as these different from ours, if you can. You can name none but ours. With ours then only the Holy Ghost abided all these ages. guiding them into all truth. Whence secondly it follows, that he cannot now be guiding your governors into all truth, they being manifestly guided into opinions directly opposite to those doctrines which were, all these last thousand years, taught by all those who were governors of the church. If you could shew governors of churches in all these last ten ages still teaching those points in which you differ from us, without teaching other notorious

the

ег

ni

th

fu

he

gi

to

au

th

ch

wł

for

be

ed.

ve

ter

10

do

wb

the

mi

or

we

ble

wh

ph

vif

use

as :

and

gai

lar

I a

the

teac

lees

plead, that this spirit of truth might as truly have been said promised to the governors of your church, as to those of ours: but this promise, not being performed to them (there being no such persons to be found in those ages) was not doubtless promised to them, otherwise Christs promise

had not been performed.

18. My twelfth and last text, shewing clearly that this promised assistance was extended to infallibility, is Epbef. 4. Whence appears, that the end and intention of Christ in giving the chief governors of that church (which was to be visible in all ages) was fuch an end, and fuch an intention, as could not be compassed by giving us such chief governors, guides and instructors in belief, as were meerly fallible, and who might lead us into circumvention of error, even then, when they were legally affembled together to deliver the truth, from their highest tribunal, in a general council. For had all these our chief governors, even then, been liable to broach gross errors, vented for divine verities (and pressed upon all to be admitted as fuch) how had Christ obtained that end for which he gave us these our prime governors, guides and Instructors? For be gave some apostles (succeeding always in full apostolical authority, as we see in St. Peters successors:) some prophets (those saith St. Thom. Rom. 12. v. 6. are called prophets in the New Testament who expounded the prophetical fayings with that spirit with which the scripture was written;) and some evangelists (that is preachers of the gospel. So Philip is called an evangelift, AA. 21. v. 8. So St. Paul bid Timothy do the work of an evangelist, Tim. 4. v. 5.) some Pastors and teachers, whose offices are more known. But to what end did he give all these? It follows, For the perfecting the Saints. How pitifully should

to

ve

UT

Ot

h

t-

(e

e

they be perfected by obtruders of gross intolerable errors for divine verities? For the work of the minifry; how pitifully also had fuch men performed this work? For the edifying of the body of Christ; fuch broachers of errors had been fitter to work her destruction. How long did God intend to give all these forts of persons, of which some were to be endued with the plenitude of apostolical authority, and confequently with an infallible authority: how long, I fay, did God give fuch to his church; till we all come into the unity of the faith; which will not be until the last days of all: wherefore until the end of the world, the world shall be provided. But are we, by being thus provided, fufficiently secured from all error? the next verse will tell you, that this was Gods chief intent, that we benceforth be no more children toffed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of dostrine, by flight of men and cunning craftines, whereof they lie in wait to deceive. Gods end then was so to provide us of a means, by which we might be so secured in our belief, that no mans craft or cunning might be able to tofs us to and fro; as we see now all they are, who hold themselves able to bring evidence of fcriptare, against all those who for the last ten ages have been apostles, prophets, evangelists pastors and teachers in Christ's visible church.

19. To elude some of my texts, our adversaries use to say, we must indeed hear the church, as long as she teacheth what is conformable to scripture; and so long the gates of hell shall not prevail against her; so long, and no longer, she is the pillar and ground of truth, and God is with her, &c. I answer, first, that in consequence to this the father of lies himself may be believed so long as he teacheth conformably to scripture. Secondly, who sees not how ridiculous it is to say, we shall bear

the truth from the church, as long as she does not teach against the truth. Is this to be the pillar of truth a straw is a pillar as long as it bendeth not, and quickfand is sure ground until it yeilds. Blasphe. mous is the sense which makes Christ speak nonfense. As all by a voice from heaven were bid to hear Christ, so all are bidden by Christ to hear his church: her governors therefore shall never come by unanimous confent to propose lies for articles of faith. For if all should teach a lie (as every error against scripture is a lie) with whom is that promise made good, that the spirit of truth sould guide them into all truth? if we may be misled by all those guides which God gave his church, to the end that we bence forth be no more children toffed too and fro, and carried about, &c. how thor did God fall of his intent in falling upon fuch guides, as being liable to swarve from the scripture must needs leave us, yea, make us toffed it and fro. Read but over the texts I cited last sed. on out of the old testament, and you shall see how flatly this interpretation opposeth Gods word, which shall never depart from the churches mouth, nor ber seed, nor the seed of ber seed, &c. See also my answer above, N. 10. thirdly, thus you will leave no text to prove she shall never errin fundamentals, for you will still be answered; that fo long as in them she teacheth conformably to scripture she shall not err in them; but if once in them she teacheth not conformably to Scripture, she shall err even in them; and so Christ shall have no church.

20. Having now ended the compleat dozen of texts brought partly out of the old scriptures, manifestly promising infallibility to Christs church; partly out of the new, manifestly confering the same: I cannot but desire all those who read those lines out of a desire of finding the truth, that they

would

w

fa

b

i

e

n

0

ti

t

h

V

f

1

b

t

I

t

ach

th

nd

le-

n-

to

his

me

les

er-

at

uld

by

to

ren

ort

ch

to

a.

ee

rd.

tb.

ee

BO

in

at

to

ice

re,

all

of

12-

h;

he

ofe ney ruld would stay here a while, and examine carefully whether thefe texts be not clearer, and come not far more home, than those texts which were the best Dr. Fern brought to prove, that scripture by it felf is so our infallible judge? see those texts examined, Sect. 10. See also if you have any thing near fo good grounds out of scripture for any one of those twenty four Points which I have shewed to be necessary to salvation, and for which confequently you fay you have clear scripture. Confer these with the best you have for the keeping the funday, for baptizing infants, &c. which I have here examined; and ask your own conscience, whether you can be able to give your own judge a reason why you did not hear his voice, speaking far more home in these texts than he did in those? Lastly, I again call upon our adversaries, to shew by evidence of scripture, if they can, that these twelve texts here cited by me, are not capable of that interpretation which we, conformably to our churches doctrine, have given them? but still we note that they fall short of doing this, so long as they only shew, that it is possible to invent some different interpretation of these texts, from that which we have given them; for so even the texts which the apostles have interpreted out of the old scripture, may be shewed to have been capable of other interpretations, though the interpretations they gave them were very true: you must then shew, and that by evident demonstration, that the interpretation which our church gives them, is not true: or else vain is your boast, that you hear not our church because you bave evident demonstration of scripture against ber; for no less can suffice against so publick authority, even according to your own principles Sect.

Se& 16.

The same is proved by several reasons.

I. THE first reason why the church must need be furnished with some infalible means befides the use of scripture, (which use is not infallible though the scriptures be infallible) is taken out of that which I touched upon (Sect. 10. N. 13.) to wit, that there is no reason, nor any one single text, teaching that the church in the law of nature, should be said to be priviledged with infallibility, above the church of Christ in the law of grace: but the church in the law of nature, which lasted for two thousand years (until the first writing of scripture by Moses) was all that while infallible in proposing true traditions, and not so much as liable to propose false ones. This I prove, because all the faith which the true believing people had in those two thousand years was infallible, though it relied only on the proposal of the church; proposing such or such a point as received from God revealing to Adam or some other Patriarch those verities; for example, that they were to observe the Sabbath, Gen. 2. The diftinction between clean and unclean beafts and meats, Gen. 7. and Gen. 9. v. 3. That the foul is immortal; that the rewards and punishments of the next life lasted for ever; that they were, by the fall of Adam, conceived in original fin; that fuch and fuch remedies were to be used to free themfelves and their children from it; what repentance they were to use; how fast they were to stand to their traditions; how they were to account it a most damnable sin to forsake them, &c. This was the faith of all true believers in the world, which for two thousand years had no other ground

than

tr

th f

in

W

th

21

P

oj li

h fp

İ

th

u

11

n

P

W h

tı h

I

tl

b

11

41

th

t

th

A

n

ai

ds

e-

ıl-

en

le

2-

1.

h

1.

fo

I

e-

15

of

15

Y

is

h

0

2

S

d

0

than the revelation of God, as proposed by the tradition of the church present to all believers in every age, in which these believers lived. though their tradition was inferior to ours, as I shewed in the place now cited, yet the church then, in every age, was infallible in propounding that which they had once received by revelation: and the believers of each age resting upon the infallible authority which their present church had in propounding those divine verities, bad the same spirit of faith, as St. Paul faith, 2 Cor. 4. The mifbelievers then had the same spirit also which they have now in opposing the churches tradition. This spirit, before the flood, was in Cain, who, as Thargum Hierofolymitanum faith, protested to Abel that there was no justice, nor judge, nor other world than this, nor no reward for virtue, nor punishment for fins: and perhaps he used the argument which Dr. Fern and many now use, that his part was negative, Abel's affirmative, and so Abel was bound to prove what he held; which because he could do only by tradition, Cain (having the true misbelievers spirit) scoffed at all tradition: his herefy made the world fo corrupt, that few just men were left at the flood of Noab, although this herefy was strangely opposed by Enoch, above four hundred years before the flood, whence St. Jude (v. 11.) having faid, woe be to them for they have gone in the way of Cain, adds (v. 14.) and Enoch also the seventh from Adam prophessed of these, saying, behold our Lord comes in his boly thousands to do judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among ft them of their ungodly deeds. After Noah's flood, these deniers of Gods judgment being extinguished; Nimrod was the second arch-heretic, as Josephus witnesseth, l. 1. Antiq. C. 4. for he taught, that men were not beholding to God, but to themselves for temporal prosperity; and thus

ve

W

m

1

re

th

th

CL

ga

gı

ar

16

ha

tu

th

fee

VI

tic

gi

G

ha

tic

lie

lib

fal

po

w] of

CO

no w

C

re

thus herefies, by contempt of tradition, again multiplied: yet still God had a visible church holding fast the above named traditions received from A. dam, as the keeping of the Sabbath, &c. And some five hundred years before God gave the first scripture to the children of Israel only; he did separate Abraham from all other nations, giving afterwards unto him and his the precept of circumcifion (Gen. 17.) which precept (though no scripture could be then shewed) was, for above four hundred years, observed by his posterity as a necessary precept. Upon tradition also they believed the covenant God made to Abrabam of making him the father of many nations; and that the Messias should be born of his seed. Then after Moses's days scripture was written, but given only to the children of Ifrael: no other nation being bound to fubmit to this law. All other nations, as they had then several true believers among them, when Abrabam was separated from them, so there is not the least mention of their total decay in belief after that separation; all they then still believed what they had believed before, upon the same ground as they did before, neither were the scriptures promulged among them. And thus true faith might be preserved among many who never heard of scripture until Christs time; that is, for another two thousand years, and more. Just so true faith, even after Christs time, was preserved among many without any scripture; as I shall by and by shew. But to go on, we read that Fob and his friends (when or wheresoever they lived) lived not among the progeny of Abrabam; and yet Fob was most eminent in virtue and true faith, and his friends (and probably many of his and their neighbours) believed in one God, held the refurrection of the flesh, and that God should judge all according to their works, and divers

vers other points, relying still only upon tradition. Why should the tradition of Christs church be more fallible than theirs was? as I argued, feet. 13. fee that place, and also what I said, feel. 10. N. 13. and you will see that there is far greater reason why our tradition should be credited more than theirs. Is not Christs church nobler than theirs? did God give them any means fitter to fecure their traditions from being falfified, than he gave his church: could tradition be an infallible ground for above four thousand years before Christ. and can it not have been so ever since Christ for 1686 years? add also to this, that the children of Israel, though they had the scriptures, yet they had not all necessary points written in their scripture, but did rely wholly upon the tradition of their church for the truth of them, as I shewed. lett. 10. N. 7.

2. My fecond reason, to prove the church is provided of some infallible means for the secure direction of her children, is, that not only from the beginning of the world to Christs preaching his new Gospel, the infallible faith of several true believers had no other ground but the infallibility of their respectively present church, in proposing the traditions she had received; but also the first true believers in Christ relied in their faith upon the infallibility of Christs church, not having any other infallible ground but her authority, affirming that she, by tradition, had received such and such points taught her by Christ, or his apostles. See what I said in my last sect. N. 16. This manner of believing, even our own protestant adversaries confess to have been infallible, until the whole canon of the scripture was written, and divulged, which was some seventy or eighty years after Christs passion. Now how this manner of security relying upon the church, which, from the begin-

de

de

Y

tb

be

ve

fc

bo

th

be fa

fo

Lu

the

ne

ing

pu

rat

is,

val

chu

at 1

le &

the

hol

and

diti

with

the

forn

trad

golo

to g

in t

info

who

ning of the world unto the finishing of the last book of scripture and publishing of the same, had been the common practice of true believers, did prefently turn to be Popish, and unlawful, I cannot conceive: but I am fure all our adversaries stoutly affirm that it is fo; and here their part is affirmative, and affirmative of the unlawfulness of that which from the beginning of the world was ever lawful unto that day. Wherefore to plead against fo long a prescription (that the world was not capable of a longer) for introducing a new obligation of not believing upon a ground which had been, for above four thousand years, able to bear all the faith of the world, evidence of scripture ought to be brought: what then more reasonable than to ask of them to cite at least one single clear text, commanding all the believers of Christ's church to give over relying upon her authority, as now never to be any more infallible after the finishing and publishing of the last book of scripture? our adversaries cannot bring any such text affirming this clearly, without we will be pleased to take their fallible and ungrounded interpretations to be a ground fure enough to make the texts reach home to the proof of what we demand; which cannot be allowed by us; because, by their own confession, their interpretation is fallible: and we must have an infallible ground to overthrow an infallible authority, standing sure even from the beginning of the world. Call then, and call again and again, for this text, and be fure to allow no interpretation to help the text to reach home, but fuch as can, by clear scripture, be shewed to convince that the text tells you evidently, that after the finishing and publishing of the last book of scripture, no body was ever to rely upon the churches authority, now grown fallible, though ever before infallible. Do but stand close to this, and their vain boast of demonstrating

t

1

.

n

1,

0

to

t,

to

er

1d

d.

115

11

2

ne

be

n,

ve

111-

of

in,

IOI

an,

the

and

ody

ty,

ole.

of

ing

demonstrating this by scripture, will fall down dead before thy feet to be trampled upon by thee. Yea, not to condemn their own brethren the Lutherans (who deny the Apocalyps or Revelations to be scripture) they will tell thee, that for diverse ages this book was not known to be certain scripture, and yet perhaps this was the very last book of scripture, until the publishing of which the infallibility of the church was to last. If this he fo, then you must allow it probable that the infallibility of the church lasteth until this very day. for any certainty we have of the contray: for your Lutheran brethren will fay, that book of the Apocalybs was never as yet sufficiently published to the church to be scripture; for if it were so, they neither could, nor would reject it. Secondly, it feems inconceptible how the writing and publishing fuch a scripture, as was at last written and published, should, without any distincter declararation than the scripture, by little and little (that is, as people were pleased to copy it out) make valid the hitherto infallible authority of this church: there being in this scripture twelve texts at the least (as I have shewed in the two former fections) recommending to all, the authority of the church; besides, divers others bidding them hold still her traditions, and inculcating this over and over again; as I shewed, feet. 10. N. 9. Traditions do not grow weaker, but stronger, by being witnessed also by writing; and the more authority the writing has, the more strength is added to the former tradition: for example, we know by tradition there is fuch a place as the Indies, where gold is to be found; but when our own fleets come to go thither, and fetch the gold from thence, and in testimony thereof stamp golden pieces with this inscription, brought by our fleet from the Indies, and when acts of parliament come to be fet forth corcerning

cerning the value of fuch, and fuch pieces; when I fay this golden printed testimony comes forth, is not the former tradition grown rather more, than become less credible? so when any of the former most credible traditions come to be now written in the golden letters of the scriptures, and of such foriptures as commanded traditions to be held, and commanded again and again the church to be heard. followed, obeyed, relied upon as the very pillar and ground of truth; is not her authority and the credit of her traditions rather increased, than lesfened, by the golden and divine writing? Again, it was wholly necessary that if after the finishing of the canon, the church was no longer to be infallible, that notice thereof, by some very public decree, or act, should have been given to all the people in the church, that they might not go on. grounding their faith upon the infallible tradition of this church, as they did before, left fo doing they should rely now, not upon the pillar and ground of truth, but upon a fallible authority. That this was done you can prove by no kind of acitimony.

m

tir

an mi

tio wh

tho

any

the

ficie

and

on i

he b

upor

men

could

brou

been

3. But I can prove, by a most grave testimony, that, long after the finishing of the canon of scripture, the faithful believers still held on their former manner of relying in their whole faith wholly upon the infallible authority of the church; just as I faid before, that when Mofes gave the fcripture to the lews, the faithful people among the Gentiles had not these scriptures, but continued fill to believe upon tradition only (see my first number.) my testimony is out of St. Irenaus, who was disciple to St. Polycarp, although he lived an hundred and fourscore years after Christ. faint, in that unquestioned work of his against Valentinus, L. 3. C. 4. Where he shews, in what manner we were all to believe the fame things which

18

1

n

h

d

1

C

e

١,

n

d

of

y,

r-

1-

A

p.

ne

ed

-At

10

20

115

0-

at

1gs

ich

which now we do believe, although there were no scripture at all; and he shews this by shewing how, even after the writing of scripture, many whole nations did believe, who had never feen the fcripture, by following (as an infallible rule) that order of tradition which had from hand to hand been delivered to the prelates of the church, and by them to the churches, of which they respectively had charge. For thus he speaks; what if the apostles bad not left us the scriptures? must we not have followed that order of tradition which they delivered to those to whose charge they left the churches to be governed? to this order of tradition (by the unwritten word) many barbarous nations do affent, who have believed in Christ without any writings, keeping diligently the ancient traditions. Note, that he calls these traditions ancient, because they had stood a good while after the finishing of the canon, before which time all nations believed meerly on tradition, as I faid, and before which time, no one tradition of christian faith could be ancient. Hence then St. Irenanus proves, that we might believe with divine faith, upon the fole account of, or meerly relying upon, that very tradition, which the apostles de facto left to those to whom they left the government of the church, although the apostles had never written any thing at any time. St. Irenaus therefore did believe that the tradition de facto lest by the apostles was a sufficient ground to uphold divine and infallible faith. and confequently that it was infallible: fo that upon it meerly, whole nations might believe: for if he had not thought that they had believed meerly upon tradition, but had only by it been recommended to take the scripture for their ground, he could not hence have shewed (to shew which he brought this proof) in what measure we had all been obliged to believe all the points of our chrif-M- 2 tiam

tian faith, although never any scripture at all ha been at any time to be written, in which case had been impossible for our belief to have had any kind of relation to scripture. And because the belief of these nations had no such relation, this erample was to his purpose, which otherwise had no Now what St. Irenaus fays must needs in all reason have been true; for the scripture by the apostles was only written in Greek, and some yen few parts in the Hebrew then currant: a vast multitude of nations understood not these language as I have shewed Sect. 1. N. 9. neither did the postles take any care to procure the scripturen be turned into the languages of every converted nation which had a different tongue; for had ther done fo, divers of these translations would either have been for some ages extant, or at least some memory of them, whereas there is not the leaf fign of any fuch thing. The Latin tongue wa by the Romans imposed upon most of those many nations, which were converted in the apostles age, and the ages following; wherefore a man would think that in the first place, or among the very first, this language would have been chosen by the apostles for publishing the scriptures, if the scrip tures had been the only ground to be relied upon in faith; yet for all this you will not grant our vulgar edition (which you grant to be the most and ent of all Latin editions) to have been fet forth by any command given by the apostles, or by any one of their immediate successors, or to have been ap proved by them; from hence then we manifelly gather, that the apostles esteemed that very tradtion, which they delivered to these to whom they committed the government of the church, to k a most sufficient ground to support infallible faith and consequently they held such traditions infallble, leaving them for the only ground of faith

in car aft in for

he

vei

Gr nol Gr (w

If.

at cur wit ry

not

clea

fall of i I pi moi

be in which apo

gina ther whi the

ble i port fuch lible

unde

had e it

any be-

ernol

Sin

the

ery ul-

ga

2-

हिं अ

ney

her

me aft

125

INY

ge,

ery

he

p-

10

CI-

by

ne

P

ey

e

10

he

he far greater part of the nations which they converted, to whom they delivered no scripture at all in their own tongue, nor left any command (that can be proved) that scripture should be (presently after the finishing of the canon) delivered to them in their own language; for had this been done, some of their translations would have been kept. If you fay they had the scriptures, though in Greek only. I answer, that those who understand are never the nearer for having a not Greek, Greek book. Why did not St. Peter and St. Paul (who writ in Greek even to the Romans themselves) at that time they stayed in the Latin church, procure or order the scriptures to be put in Latin; if, without grounding ourselves upon scripture in every point of belief, no part of our belief, which is not so grounded, can be infallible. And hence clearly and orderly follows,

4. My third reason, that no man now has any infallible faith, but he who relieth upon the tradition of the present church, as an infallible ground. This I prove out of what has been by me already demonstrated. First, for the most learned fort that be in the world, they cannot know, by any ground which is infallible, (except the tradition of the church be infallible,) which books the prophets or apostles did write, which not, as I have shewed, fed. 3. Nor which be the true uncorrupted original copies, which not, as I shewed, feet. 4. and therefore they must rely in these two points (upon which no less than all their faith doth rely,) upon the tradition of the church as infallible, for a fallible tradition cannot be a sufficient ground to support an infallible faith; either then they have no fuch faith, or they must allow tradition to be infallible. As for those who are not so learned as to understand Hebrew and Greek, or who have not means to know which copies be uncorrupted in

M 3

•

1

tı

t

V

b

ſ

tı

y

TE

ft

y

U

cl

de

W

[H

to

fu

m

th

fu

ce

do

in

do

far

fhe

thi

gro

Greek or Hebrew; they must believe this but by meer human authority, if they refuse the churcher tradition: so by and by, N. 7. And so for translations, which be the very prime conveyers of all that is in scripture, to those who understand not Greek and Hebrew, either these men must rely upon the word of God, as conveyed unto them by fuch fallible men, as I have shewed their translaters to be, feel. 5. or, far more wifely, they must rely upon the tradition of the church as infallible; and if they do not, their faith will ever be fallible, as I have shewed. Again, it is not the bare letter of scripture which can be a rule or ground of faith unto us, but it is the fense of this letter in terpreted according to the true mind of the Holy Shoft: now the private interpretation, which any particular mans wit, or learning, or spirit can give to this bare letter, is fallible; even tho' he shall exactly observe those twenty several rules of which I spake, feet. 7. N. 7. for these rules are all fallible; wherefore the bare letter, taken in the fense that we, by our private, wit, learning, and spirit imagine, and meerly conjecture it to be taken, is not the infallible sense of the Holy Ghost, and therefore no ground of faith, even to those most learned men who are able to use exactly all those twenty rules. See the place last cited. But as for all that vast multitude which cannot understand perfectly Hebrew and Greek, it is impossible for them to observe those twenty rules (of which one supposeth perfect skill in Hebrew and Greek! wherefore it being our adversaries own doctring that, without the exact observance of all these 20 rules, the infallible sense of the Holy Ghost cannot be infallibly known to any one, but only fallibly; after all that still fallible industry, it is a clear demonstration, that those who know not Greek and Hebrew, cannot know infallibly what the scriptufe

by

168

2.

all

ot

ly

by

2-

ıA

e;

e,

1

of

n.

ly

Ŋ

Vè

all

of

all

he

nd

n,

nd

M

se

10

nd

10

ne

e,

ot

Y ;

e-

p.

ture bids them do or believe; they not being able infallibly to know the fense of the bare letter. which fense (you fay) is the only rule and direction of faith, and the only infallible ground upon which all divine faith must rely. Wherefore almost all mankind, who is unskilful in Greek and Hebrew, must first have, not only the letter of the scripture faithfully delivered unto them upon trust of the translators; but secondly, this must be done after that thefe translators have made an unquestionable choice of fure uncorrupted original copies, (in which choice it is not possible for them to proceed; but very fallibly as I shewed feel. 5. Thirdly, atfo they must have the sense of the letter delivered truly and afforedly unto them. I alk, by whom? you fay, by your ministers. Then (fay I) your rely upon the wit, skill and spirit of those miniflers. Is this proved infallible? no. How then is your faith infallible? as for us, we rely upon the unanimous tradition of those governors of our churches, to whom the apostles, with that charge, delivered all the important Points of our faith, as well by word of mouth, as by daily practice and swerable thereunto; commanding them to deliver to all in their churches (among whom were their future fuccessors) the same points both by word of mouth, and by the answerable practice, just as they had received. In like manner their fucceffor's fuccessively were directed and commanded to proceed. No writing (as I shall shew, Seal. 19. N. A. 5. 6. &c.) can with fo full affuredness, bring down to our age, what was taught and practifed in the first age, as perpetual tradition of the same doctrine, confirmed by the continuance of the same practice first received, and never able to be thewed to have been altered or changed. Upon this tradition, we are fure, that we believe as groundedly, at the least, as all the true believers M 4

did for the first two thousand years before any fcripture was written: And as groundedly as all the Gentiles (for only Jews had the scripture) believed at any time afterwards: and as groundedly as the Jews believed still fome things only upon tradition: for example; what remedy was to be used to take away original fin from their female children, of from their male children, dying before their circumcifion on the eighth day? and gain, as groundedly as those many nations, converted by the apostles successors, believed after the scripture was finished, though they never had so much as feen scripture, but wholly relied in their whole belief upon the antient tradition received from them, from whom the governors of their churches had originally received their governments and authority; to wit, from the apostles, as I shewed out of St. Irenaus. Tradition then of these governors of our churches, delivered unanimously by them, makes the points so delivered, now as evidently credible, and as fit objects of divine faith, as it made the points, delivered then by their governors or pastors: wherefore we have as good reason now, to take what is thus proposed for truth, revealed by God, to be indeed fo; and confequently to be embraced with so firm and immoveable adhension of understanding and will; that the preaching of the contrary by an angel from Heaven, should not stagger our belief therein: and we have as good reason to proceed thus in our belief, as all those I spoke of, had to proceed so in their belief.

5. My fourth reason hence deduced, is, that christ himself expects and exacts an infallible assent of faith to be given to any point, which is confirmed by miracle from Heaven; and such an assent, has a sufficient ground to support its infallibility. Christ calls these miracles a testimony greater than John, Mark 5. Yea, a testimony (in or-

der

de

1101

kii

tel

901

Ea

the

boi

on

tru

cle

inf

dit

fet

OF

pa

tra

all

an

and

wh

a 1

ver

tim

the

hea

pri

mi

is f

der

wit

tion

cle

full

po

crea

by I

the

17

e

d

:

1

\$

der to us) greater than his own word, if you will not believe me, believe my works. He calls that a kind of fure knowledge, which is grounded on the testimony of a miracle; so Mat. 9. v. 6. But that you may know, that the Son of man bath power on Earth to forgive fins, he faith to the man fick of the palfy, arife, take up thy bed, and go into thine bouse. You see Christ used the telimony of this one miracle, as sufficient to make them know the truth of his having power to forgive fins. Miracles then ground a fure knowledge of faith, or an infallible affent to what they confirm: but the tradition of the church, makes that which it witneffeth to be as infallible, and as evidently credible in order to us, as this curing of the man fick of the palfy, or any fuch miracle can do: therefore this tradition may be as folid a ground of an infallible affent, as a miracle: I prove it clearly thus, let any man speak as he thinks in the fight of God, and he will plainly confess that to be most true, which I am going to fay; I fay then, that though a man had lived in the country all his life, and never had feen London, yet he (meerly upon the teftimony of tradition) would fo fully believe, that there is fuch a city as London, and that it is the head town of England; that neither I nor you, canprudently conceive, how the testimony of any onemiracle (wrought on purpose, to prove that thereis fuch a city as London) should make it more evidently credible unto him, that there is fuch a city, without the testimony of any tradition, than tradition has made it without the testimony of any miracle: whence you fee tradition wins belief as powerfully as any miracle. True it is, this tradition wepoke of, is but human, and so be the motives of credibility, making it evidently credible, that God by his apostles, affirmed such or such a point untohe first believers of the church. But when it is M S OUCE

once made to me as evidently credible, that God has revealed such and such verities, as it is credible by human tradition, that there is fuch a city as London, then presently (by the grace of God) ! conclude: that it being so credible, that God has faid fuch and fuch a thing, that I cannot in prudence no more doubt that he hath faid it, than I can doubt there is fuch a city as London: I being thus affured, am by my duty to God, bound to yield that submission of my understanding to this saying of God, which is fit to be yielded to the world of God, which word cannot (without blasphemous impiety) be held subject to the least fallibility. And therefore, what by tradition is made fo evidently credible to me, to have been revealed by God to this church; ought to be accepted by me. as the word of God. Whence I ought to account it blasphemous impiety to doubt of the truth of it: and consequently, I ought to hold it infallible, and as far from all possibility of being false, as Gods And being that this very felf fame tradition tells me, that the same God, who revealed by his apostles, so many other verities to his church, did also reveal, by the same apostles, to the same church, that this church was to be heard as the mistress of truth, with whom he would ever be present, suggesting her all truth, and never permitting the gates of Hell to prevail against her; but that he placed her as a pillar, and ground of truth, giving her such pastors, as should secure her children from being toffed to and fro with every wind of doctrine; being (I fay) this very felf same tradition, which made it evidently credible unto me, that God had revealed many other verities to his church, had also (together with them) revealed this verity, of her being infallible, in propering any point for divine faith; and being that I did fee with my eyes, that the did propose her traditions

ſ

1

n

t

c

c

h

n

CI

m

po

an

ha

fo

he

H

Ch

be

CO

tiv

yie

for verities received from God, it could not but be evidently credible unto me, that God had revealed the infallibility of his church, and confequently, the questionless truth of her traditions. Wherefore I yielded that submission of my understanding to this saying of God, which was sit to be yielded to the word of God, which word I could not without blasphemous impiety, suspect to be any

way liable to fallibility.

od

ole

as

25

Ce

an

us Id

ng

of

us

y.

1-

Dy

e, nt

t;

to

ut

h,

11-

nd

2-

e,

ed

ee

OT

6. Here, by the way, out of what has been now faid, we may eafily clear two common difficulties: the first is, how we commit no vicious circle in our faith: for though first, we believe the scripture to be Gods word, because the church, which is infailible, told us fo: yet, when again we are asked, why we first believed the church to be infallible? we do not fay (as our adversaries would needs make us fay, whether we would or no) that we first believe our church to be infallible, because the scripture told us the church was infallible. But we answer, that we first believe the church to be infallible by her tradition, delivered her by the apostles, before any scripture was made; which tradition makes things fo evidently credible, as I have just now declared, that even a miracle wrought purposely, to confirm such a point, makes not that point more evidently credible. Tradition therefore is aground able to support an infallible affent. Well then, I believe Chrift to have been crucified, because the scripture saith fo; I believe the scripture, because the church by: her tradition, faith the scripture to be Gods word; I believe the church, and her tradition, for its own credibility. If you ask me why I do so? I answer, because I will do prudently in a matter of so great consequence; that is, I will submit, and I will captivate my understanding in such a manner; as to yield all firm affent, which (by God's grace) I politiv:

possibly can do unto that, which the church by her tradition proposeth unto me as Gods true word; upon which word my understanding shall be fixed so immoveably, that no angels words shall move me from it: see feet. 23. N. 5, 6. Hence you fee to what my understanding cleaveth so fast; to wit, to God's true word proposed by the church, or her unanimous tradition. Now if you ask me; why my will is fo resolute in making choice of thus fubmitting, and thus captivating my understanding? I easily answer, because my understanding has evidently feen (I do not then go blindly to work, as our adversaries conceive we all do, sed, 8.) that even according to all reason, prudence, and piety, it is most unreasonable, imprudent and impious, not to yield this submission of understanding to that which is evidently credible to be Gods word; and that to the full as that which is confirmed by miracle: for what is affirmed by the churches unanimous tradition, is no less evidently credible than what is confirmed by miracle, as I proved in the very last number;) therefore (and in many other respects) it is most unreasonable, most imprudent, and impious, not to yield all posfible submission of understanding to that which is proposed as Gods word, by the unanimous tradition of the church. It is madness not to believe what is made evidently credible, even then when Heaven is offered unto me, if I will believe it, and when Hell is infallibly to be my punishment, if I will not believe it. For so our Saviour himself said, when men had only tradition to rely on (to wit, before any word of that new scripture was written) be that believes and is baptized shall be faved; but be that believes not shall be damned. (Mark 16. v. 15.) And many were damned for not believing the church, before either the old scripture was written in the law of nature, and before the finishing e

e

finishing of the New Testament in the first seventy years after Christ's passion; and after the finishing of it also, many were damned for not believing among those nations to whom the faith without any scripture was so well proposed, that thousands of them were most true believers, meetly grounding their whole faith upon the church and her unanimous tradition.

7. The fecond difficulty (which may eafily be cleared by what has been here faid) is, how the ignorant vulgar fort come to imbrace our faith, and all the points of it, with an infalible affent, and that prudently? whence will appear, that tradition is the fittest deliverer of certain truth, and the most proportionable to the capacity of the incomparably greater part of the world. For no man, who is above the degree of a fool, is fo ignorant, but by fuch careful fearch, as all are bound to use in finding out the way to their last end (which is eternal falvation;) he will prefently find, that the unanimous tradition of our present church propofeth fuch and fuch points to be believed as being points revealed by Chrift's apostles to the church: for example; the trinity, the incarnation, the death and resurrection of our Saviour, his baving planted upon Earth an infallible church for our direction, &c. Then having found this to be the unanimous consent, and tradition of our church, he may easily be made capable how evidently credible that is which is proposed by the tradition of such a church. First, because all those who believed for the first two thousand years, did believe all that they believed upon a weaker tradition than this is, as I discoursed before. Secondly, he may also eafily understand how true it is which I said, N. 5. that no miracle can move a man so effectually to believe, that there is such a place as London, as tradition does move him thereunto; wherefore as miracles

miracles can beget an infallible affent, for also may tradition. Thirdly, he can understand, that the churches tradition is secured by God, from deceiving us; for elfe, all the faith of those millions and millions (to whom God gave no other ground but this to ground that faith, which he, under pain of damnation, exacted of them) might have been an error; and could not have been infallible. as he exacted their faith should be. Now all this being most true, and being also a real proposal of what is indeed revealed by God (which it is not when any false church useth this argument) God can, and will concur with this ignorant man, as well as with any doctor, to raife him by fupernatural grace to an infallible affent to the truth, which he embraced most prudently upon reasons proportionable to his capacity; which reasons do really make the verities which he believes, to be first evidently credible to him. His faith may then be truly infallible, though he knows not that it is infallible; for this knowledge is no way necessary even in learned men, as I shall say, feet. 23. Now among our sectaries, ignorant men can never imbrace the points of faith with an infallible affent. For they must imbrace no point with such an affent, but when the fcripture, not taken according to the bare letter, but taken as interpreted truly, tells them that fuch a point is true. But I ask how it can ever be made evidently credible to them, that fuch a place of feripture is truly interpreted in that fense? but especially seeing that the greatest protestant doctors teach, that the true sense cannot be found out but by observing perhaps twenty rules, of which they are by them plainly told, that they cannot observe divers, as I noted just now, N. 4. whence it is clear they may and must despair of finding amongst you any true ground fit to support an infallible affent. This your

your own prime doctors did eafily fee, and knew not how to deny. Hence Whitaker de farra feriptura, Q. 5. C. 9. Eighthly, because the unskilful know not rightly to use these means (of confulting the Hebrew and Greek originals) they must go to those who are more skilful: So he. And your great divine Baronius in Apodixi, P. 47. The unlearned laymen cannot bave a certain and emplicate. and distinct knowledge of the scriptures, and of the dostrine contained in the foristures, or that thet ranflated bible agrees with the original edition. Yea, they do not know but by the testimony of others, that the doffrine which is proposed to them to be believed, is contained in this bible. And again, P. 48. they only by buman faith believe, that the doctrine which is proposed to them is contained in the bible. So he. You then, who are not perfectly skilled in Hebrew and Greek, are taught by your own doctors, that it is impossible for you to believe, but upon trust and reliance on the authority of some more skilful. Do you not know evidently these on whom you rely, to be fallible? yes. Why then, know evidently, that your belief amongst protestants, can never rife to be infallible, nor so much as evidently credible, even to the ignorant; for they are fure, that as your minifters fay, fuch and fuch protestant doctrine as evidently by them deduced out of the word of God; fo they are fure, that a far greater and learneder number of the present age, and all the whole numberless number of those who lived these last ten ages before your reformation, who were men most vertuous and most learned, did unanimously affirm the quite contrary doctrine to be conformable to scripture rightly understood. And this they known by your own confession: for you never deny that popish doctrine was the current doctrine of all christians these last thousand years, excepting only fuch christians as were notorious Heretics, or forme few

few others, who make no number at all fit to anpear in the view of fo many millions of millions as these ordinary laymen know to have most constantly imbraced the Roman faith; and, with a vast multitude of books, to have most learnedly maintained the doctrine flatly contrary to yours, to be the more conformable to scripture; in which they lived with far more fanctity than now you do; why then should I now for sake that, which is also confirmed (as you acknowledge) by many great councils; and choose to venture my foul with these new believers, whom I, and every ignorant man knows to go to a church every Sunday, the very walls of which church are many years older than their religion? if they will go with us the old beaten way, trodden by all antiquity, and chalked out by an uninterrupted tradition from the apoftles days to these, they, (as ignorant as they are) may, as I faid, eafily come to fee, first, that they shall have as fure ground for all their whole belief, as all true believers had the first two thousand years before the scripture was written. Secondly, they shall see they have as sure a ground as all true believers (the Yews at the most excepted) had for those two thousand years following, before other nations had the scripture. Thirdly, they shall see, that they have as fure ground as all christians are confessed to have had the first seventy years before the New Testament was finished and divulged. Fourthly, they shall fee they have as fure ground as those many nations had, who believed all that other christians did, and believed it with as true a divine faith, though they never did fee scripture; as I said even now out of the most ancient doctor St. Irenaus. So that they fee that the ground of their belief has been a most fure ground of true divine infallible faith for above more than four thoufand years, to wit, a good way downward after Christ's

1

b

t

Christ's time. Fifthly, they see also, that the last thousand years, which was just before your reformation, all those vast multitudes, whom you confels to have followed popery, to have still believed on the fame ground relying on the prefent church as infallible: therefore from Chriff's time to the reformation they see only a wonderful short space of years, in which space you fay all refused to rely in their belief upon the church: what, is this fpace to be compared to that almost whole space of time which was from the beginning of the world to this reformation; in all which vast space all faith of all men relied on the church as infallible? again (as simple as I am) I understand this evident argument, that in the thousand years just before your reformation there were many councils, many learned, and many very holy men (for they fay, that then men generally rather lived better than now.) Now these councils, these great numbers of learned and holy men could not but fee the truth of those matters which are clearly and plainly fet down in scripture; and even the proteftants themselves teach, that all necessary matters are clearly and plainly fet down in scripture: I therefore neither have charity nor wit, if I fay that they then could not fee the truth, fo manifestly clear in fuch points; wherefore upon good reafon in those points I will agree with the Roman catholics: but now, for those points which are not clear in scripture, I will also not disagree from them; because, in things confessedly not clear, you are likelier to misunderstand scripture than they: and they (besides scripture) give me that excellent fure ground of the tradition of the church, which has been a fure ground for fo many thousand years, and questionless is a furer ground than trusting you; I will then, in these points, trust them, and not you. And fo you fee why I refolve in all points

to trust the church. But all this is spoken by the

way; now let us go on.

8. My fifth reason for the infallibility of some means in the church sufficient to ground divine saith, and yet differing from scripure, is this, god has given us some means sufficient to come to the saith necessary to salvation (as has been proved Quest. 1.) But this means is not the scripture (as I have shewed in the twelve first sections;) neither is it natural reason (as I shewed, sea. 13.) Therefore the means which now actually are given us by God, are the infallible direction of the church; there being not the least appearance of probability for any other means which God has given us, though he might have given us other means, if he

had pleased.

9. My fixth reason is, that whatsoever was held by the universal church, was without farther questioning, held for frue; and the contrary to it was ever rejected as an error two manifest figns of proved, when I shall come cite the fathers authority for the infallibility of the church, feel. 20, 21, 22. and you know already St. Austin's faying in the end of his book de Haresibus, that though he tells you not in particular, what the church has defined against every one of those several hereses, yet faith he, Sufficit eam contra ifta fentire, it is enough (to make us fly them as herefies) to know that the church holds the contrary. Neither will you ever find any catholic who ever had the boldnessto fay, that all the church of his days did universally hold any thing that was an error: and their works were conformable; for never shall you read of any catholic (much less of any Holy Father) who refuled to conform himself to the universal belief and practice which was current in the whole church of their times; your Lutber and Calvin had not their spirit.

spirit. Here I intreat you to read the authorities which hereafter I shall bring out of the fathers, and you shall see the sense and feeling which sacred antiquity had in this point: see my sect. 20. Sc. How close in all interpretation of scripture (on which all depends) antiquity did ever stand to the church, I have said sect. 7. N. 9. out of Vincenti-

us Lirinenfis.

e

d

10. My feventh reason is, that without the church be provided of some other infallible means to direct us to the truth, besides scripture; there will never be any unity and agreement in the church, in necessary points of religion. have already fully shewed, that scripture alone (though submitted unto by all sides) does not produce this unity, even in necessary points; for I have numbered up twenty four fuch points not fo much as contained in scripture. Hence I frame this argument; under pain of damnation all are bound to agree in this one thing, that all and every one interiorly gives an infallible affent to all fuch points as are necessary to be believed for the attaining of falvation; because all are bound to please God, and confequently to have that faith without which it is impossible to please God: but all can never be brought to agree in this one thing (that all and every one of them interiorly gives an infallible affent to all fuch points as are necessarily to be believed for attaining falvation) without all and every one fubmit their affent to fome other infallible rule belides feripture; for submitting to scripture only does not produce this union, as fo long and fo lamentable experience has taught us: neither can the scripture alone suffice for this end, being it does not lo much as contain twenty four of fuch points as are all necessary to salvation: therefore all can never be brought to agree in that one thing (in which, under pain of damnation they must agree) without -

without they all and every one interiorly give an infallible affent to some other rule of faith than the scripture: no other, with any appearance of reason, can be thought of, but the direction of the church; therefore her direction is this rule. But if her direction be this rule, her direction must needs be infallible; and this for two very manifest reasons. The first is, that it is impossible all should be (as they are) bound under pain of damnation to follow this rule, if this rule could guide them into error: because it is impossible God should damn men, for not following so foul an error as this is, which makes them father as many lies upon God as they believe errors to be divine verities. The second reason is, because all (as I faid) are bound interiorly to give an infallible affent to all fuch points as are proposed by the church: but it is impossible to give an infallible asfent, grounded upon a ground which is not infallible (as it is clear:) therefore seeing that the ground, upon which their belief in these points must rely, is only the meer direction of the church; it evidently follows that her direction is infallible. Why I defer to answer the objections against the infallibility of the church, and some other things, I shall presently tell you.

QUEST. IV.

Which is that church, which is the infallible judge in all controversies? how she exercises her infallible judgment? and what submission is due thereunto?

IHITHERTO we have only in general declared the church to be our judge, and to be provided of some infallible means (besides scripture) to guide and direct us in faith; not intermedling with other important but more particu-

lar doubts; until we had gotten fufficient principles folidly established, to proceed to these particulars with more clear and distinct knowledge. By the church, we have hitherto understood, that bleffed congregation of people which followed the doctrine of Christ and his disciples, still propagating the doctrine delivered to them from age to age, until we come to our age. But because there be a number of congregations pretending to be this bleffed congregation; we must fee in particular, in which of them we can find this infallible means to end all controversies, and to direct us securely in all points of faith. Secondly, we must see in what particular manner this particular bleffed congregation does judge all controversies; and how the directs us in particular in all our doubts of faith. When we have found these two things, we shall foon fee the last thing we feek for, to wit, what particular submission is due from all, that they all may be securely directed in that faith which leads to eternal falvation; the end for which we all were created; and confequently, at which all our most ferious endeavours ought to aim.

2. And because we now shall come to speak of the Roman church, and to shew how she in her general councils, proposing unto herself the word of God, as well written as unwritten, does issue forth her definitions, decrees and orders by which she directs us: we only now can clearly dispatch some things, which very properly belonged to the last question, but could not be so commodiously treated there, because they required a more distinct knowledge of the questions to be handled here. Here then we shall solve the objections against the infallibility of the church, which our adversaries use to make against the Roman church in particular; and therefore they were to be treated here. Here also we must answer many things they bring

against councils; and when we declare how councils propose to themselves Gods word written, and unwritten, we must add somewhat more of tradition than has yet been faid, answering what else they object against it. And because the testimonies of the Holy Fathers, confirming the infallibility of the church, do fometimes speak of her infallibility in general, fometimes they speak of the Roman churches infallibility in particular; fometimes how infallible general councils are; fometimes how infallible the unwritten traditions of the church are (which meerly rely on her authority:) we have thought good to place their testimonies after that we have treated of all these particulars, which are linked together with fo necessary connexion one of another; that the proof of the one, is the proof of the other.

Sect. 17.

Whether the Roman church be that church which is our infallible judge?

1. DY the Roman church, we do not understand the particular diocess of Rome; but we understand, that vastly extended community of christians which hold communion with the church of Rome, submitting themselves to the bishop of Rome as to their head; fo that whatfoever he decrees with a general council, they imbrace as the definition of the true church, which they hold infalli-This is the flock of Christ adhearing to the true shepberd appointed by him, as I shall shew sect. 20. N. 6. Wherefore when you come now in particular to fee into what we refolve our faith, when we say that we rely upon the church as infallible; you shall find that it is resolved finally into the authority of God proposing such and such things to 115

t

us to be believed by this his church, whose mind is made known unto us, partly by such traditions as universally go current in her, and are most notoriously known, not only to be permitted, but also to be on all occasions unanimously taught by her prelates, and partly by such definitions and decrees, as the prelates of the church, lawfully affembled by order of, and together with their head, do set forth; of which manner of government we shall

speak in the next sections.

2. We then constantly affirm, the Roman church thus understood is our infallible judge in all our controversies of faith, and appointed by God to be fo. The proof of this is eafily and demonstratively performed, supposing the truth of all that has been faid and proved in the last question, in which both out of Old and New Testament, I have brought most convincing testimonies, to prove that God has appointed some church upon earth to be our infallible judge. The same I proved by several reasons in the last section. So that we do not. without full proof, suppose that God has appointed some church upon earth to be our infallible judge. This then (upon good proof) supposed; we eafily demonstrate this church appointed by God for our judge, to be the Roman, and only the Roman church; we do it thus: the proteftant church, and all other churches different from the Roman, do judge, do declare, and profess themselves to be fallible, even according to the infallible word of God; if then the protestant church, or any other churches different from the Roman, be infallible in all that they judge, and in that they daclare and profess to be true, even according to the word of God, they doubtless are then infallible, and speak then the infallible truth, when they judge, and declare and profess, that even according to the word of God, they are infallible:

lible: therefore infallibly they are fallible. Hence again, it being thus proved, that no church different from the Roman is infallible; and it being formerly proved that God has appointed some church upon earth to be our inllifable judge: it demonstratively follows, that the Roman church must needs be this infallible judge; because no church different from the Roman (that is, none but the Roman) can be this infallible church, as my former argument proved. Some of our adversaries are pleased fondly to mistake this argument, as if we argued thus, the Roman church claims infallibility: therefore the must needs have right to it. This argument we give our adverfaries free leave to scoffat, as much as they please; it is nothing like ours, we put all the force of our argument in this, that the church, truly appointed by God for infallible judge of controversies, cannot possibly be any of those churches which teach themselves not to be this infallible judge, becasue they teach themselves to be fallible: if then they be infallible in the doctrine they teach, they are infallible when they teach themselves to be fallible: whence it fellows that infallibly they are fallible. The chruch which is truly appointed by God to be infallible judge, must needs have this condition, that the does own her infallibility: but this is far from faying, that meerly the owning of infallibility does make infallibility her own. It is a very different thing to fay, be that must be a minister, must needs be a man, and not a woman; and to fay, that fuch an one must needs be a minister because be is a man, and not a woman; fo it is one thing to fay, the church which is the infallible judge, must be a church judging, and holding, and professing herself to be infallible; and cannot be a church which judgeth and proffeseth her self to be falible; and another quite different thing to fay, that fuch a church is Same Adj

tru

CI

CE

te

(4

ni

in

01

fic

th

If

W

ne

14

fu

PO

te

the infallible Judge, because the teacheth and professeth herself to be so.

3. Others have in exceeding plenty alledged other arguments which may be feen in them; this one being a demonstration ferves my turn, and this one being put alone, I hope my reader will more mark the force of it.

Sect. 18.

In mobat court this infattible judge decideth our con-

11

t

d

-

h

y

n-

le

ce

ne

n-

at

m

es

nt

be

an

nd

ch

ch

be

th

ier

is he

UR adverfaries would make the world be-I lieve (as may be feen in Dr. Fern's, Sed. 17.) that they have a great advantage against us; when they put this question to us; for by outting at they conceive they put us at variance with one another, because some will say, first, the pope can infallibly by himfelf, out of a council, flecide all controverties; others will fay, fecondly, that a council can do this without a pope. But I must tell them that, thirdly, all and every one of us (without the least disagreement) do and will unanimoully fay, That all those definitions declare an infallible truth, which are let forth by the pope defining regother with a general council. Any one way of defining infallibly is enough, and is futficient to end any controverses: yield but to this one way, and we will press you no further. If you will not yield to the pope defining jointly with a council, we are fure enough that you will neither yield to pope alone, nor council alone. If God has provided us of one way, which is a fure and infallible way to know any necessary point of faith, and to keep us all in fetled unity, cobterning all matters declared by this infallible asthority

thority (fuch as we all hold this authority to be:) it is impossible that we should want necessary direction, or a sufficient means to maintain that unity which is necessary for the church, or that guidance which is necessary for our salvation. If their opinion be true who fay, the definition of the pope alone is sufficently infallible to do this without a council; these men furnish us with two means of necessary direction; for they do not destroy, but maintain the former; because no man is so sense. less as to hold the definitions of the pope to be in. fallible without a council, and to be fallible with one. So also no man is so senseless as to say, that councils definitions are infallible without a pope; and that they are not infallible when councils define together with the pope. But these men who fay, councils defining even without a pope, are infallible, do also add a third means of infallible direction. The one means I speak of is allowed by every one, and this one means is sufficient for every one. You see then, this disagreement gives you not the least advantage to deny the infallbility of the Roman church, as long as by this name we understand continually, either this church speaks by universal tradition, or the church representative, by which we understand the bishop of Rome our supreme pastor defining with a lawful general council. The infallibility of the church, thus understood, is a point of catholic faith; the other are opinions of catholic divines, all who agree in the exacting the belief of the infallibility of the church taken in this fense # we still take it.

2. If you ask us then, not our opinions, but our belief, (I pray mark this distinction:) we all unanimously agree, that the supreme bishop of the church, or pope, defining with a general council,

tl

fc

it

W

no

in

D

07

inf

:)

·

of

ut

e.

n-

th

at

e-

10

re

ole

ed for

ves

ili-

me

re-

op

W-

the

the

25

but

0-

the

icil,

15

is the infallible judge of controversies. And it cannot feem strange to any christian, that the same God, who gave an infallible affistance to Solomon (who proved an idolator) that the church might enjoy the benefit of his books, should give either the supreme pastor of the church, or the church representative, for that particular time, his infallible affistance, that all the church might enjoy fo great a benefit as is the secure direction in all points of faith, and the perpetual preservation in unity of faith, not to be had sufficiently by any other means that is given unto us. Yea, who can choose but think it strange, that Christ, for the secure direction of all the first christians converted only in the apostles days, should give this infallibility to all, and every one of the apostles: and that he should regard so little the secure direction of all that infinite number of christians, who were to be converted after the apostles times to the very end of the world, that for their fakes. and for the secure direction of their souls, and their preservation in unity of faith, he would not give this infallibility fo much as to one only man? no nor to the church representative in a full council. even for that short time in which they are to pass their decrees concerning the most important affairs in christendom? especially seeing that on the one fide, this gift of Infallibility is given, not for their private fakes to whom it is given; but it is given for the universal good, and necessary direction, concord, and perpetual unity of the whole church: and on the other fide, that, even now after we have scripture, the necessity of this infallibility is fo great, that our adversaries with Dr. Fern, Sect. 17. do confess, that fuch a judge or umpire of christendom (as a council endued with infallibility) would (if to be bad) be a ready means N2 to

to compose all differences, and restore truth and peace. Is it then strange that God should give he necessary a gift, or a gift so beneficial to he church?

1

2

6

f

6

r

¥

V

I

(

f

C

cl

tì

g

ti

V

etal

h

th

W

bt

th

gi

bo

th

pr

fo:

201

ju

3. Having now, by all faid in the former discourfes, proved, that the church diffused, or universal was furnished by God with some infallible means belides icripture, to direct all fecurely in faith, and to preferve them in unity, by the true decision of all their controversies; we have found already ; nough to perswade any prudent man, to seek at ter the particular manner by which this means to be appliable, and serviceable unto him. Now this is easily understood by that manner of government which we had here in England, from the conquest to our days; according to which, all the decrees and ordinances by which we were governed or directed, were to be made by a lawful king jointly with a lawful parliment. This re presentative, and their decrees are called the de crees of the kingdom. Just so, the particular manner by which the church diffused or univerfal is directed and governed, is by a lawful pope, as supreme pastor, jointly with a lawful council and this affembly is called the church represents. tive, and their decrees are called the decrees of the church. This way you shall find to have been very connatural to the church: for it was impossible, that the church universal or diffuse thould be affembled for the making the decrea And though children and women belong to the thurch, yet all easily fee, that the church pe vernment belongs not to them; neither their vote (in any mans opinion) required to the decision in controvelies of faith: we say all that the laity hath no decifive voice in this pour they are Theep and not pastors. Every interior clergyman is not a confiderable governor in the church:

and

e fo

ouf.

Yal.

ans,

an

o of

7 6.

af.

ge-

om

go-

ful

rede-

lar

er-

pe,

1:

ta-

evt va

fel

es

d

E 3

church: this government then belongs to fuch as are prelates, overfeers, and governors over the rest, bistops placed by the Holy Ghost over all the flock, to feed (or govern) the church of God, Act. 20. v. 28. for not lay-magistrates, but only eccle-Sastical are said, (Epb. 4) to be given us by Christ for the work of the ministry, for the edifying the body of Christ, that benceforth we may not be carried about with every wind of doctrine, &c. It was not to a lay-magistrate, but to a bishop to whom Christ said, feet my shoep, Jo. 21. v. 15. It is worth the readers knowledge to relate here (out of Rufinus, 1. 10. and Caranza's fum just befare the council of Nice) how the first general council was affembled in the days of the first christian emperor Constantine the great. Rusinus then, baving related how the herefic of Aries grawing up to the ruin of christendom, Confrantine the great, ex sententia sucerdatum, by the advice or judgment of the priofts, did call together episcopale concilium, a council of bishops, to judge of the propositions and questions of Arius. hold their power of judicature acknowledged by their calling, and coming, and fitting for they were called, did come and fit, for no other end, but to end controversies by their judgment. And then he tells us, how these bishops beginning to give up in writing complaints against one another to the emperor; he putting all those papers in his bosom, without ever opening or looking upon them, faid to the bishops, God bas appointed you priests, and given you power even to judge of us also; and therefore we are rightly judged by you; but you (speaking of them as a whole council) cannot be judged by men; wherefore expect only the judgment of God upon you; and that your complaints, whatever they be, may be referred to the examine of God. N 3 For

of

firs

ful

CO

cil

afc

gre

cal

Spi

the

the

gb

fre

10

de

ed

th N

th

gh Gi

fel

the

Ir

the

pr

lit

tin

me

Icr

the

th

nu

fol

For you are given unto us by God, as God's (that is, judges in his place;) It is not convenient that men should judge the Gods; but he alone of whom it is writen, (psal. 82.) God standeth in the congregation of the Gods. He judgeth among the Gods. Constantine having said this; he commanded all those papers to be burnt. And, when now the sentence of the council, defining that the son of God was consubstantial to his father, was brought to him, ille tanquam a deo prolatam veneratur, &c. that is, He did reverence this sentence as tronounced by God himself; and if any one should offer to go against it, he protests be will banish him as a man geing against

the divine statutes.

4. Behold here how the decrees of councils ought to be reverenced as divine. Hence St. Athanasius in epist. ad episcop. africanos, after this self fame definition, faid, the word of God by the Nicene council does remain for ever and ever. Hence St. Hormisda Cfic, ille dift. 58. faith, we believe that in them (the fathers of this council) the boly goof did speak. Hence St. Cyril (in the council of epbefus tom. 1. ep. 1.) speaks thus of the fathers of the council of Nice, they lest they should swarve from truth, being inspired by the boly ghost (because it was not they which did speak, but the spirit of God and the father who did speak in them, as Christ our faviour protestetb) bave fet forth the rule of pure and unblameable faith. So he, and the parenthesis also is his. His also are these words, bow can it be doubted but that Christ did preside invisibly in that boly and great council? epist. ad anastas. Alexandrinum. St. Leo (whom I shall cite by and by) faith, that what this council defines, it did feal by the boly ghost. St. Isidore, in the preface to his collection of canons, not only recommends what the first four councils have defined, but saith also

13,

en

is

0%

7-

2-

of

1-

le

le

4

A

S

f

of the decrees of other councils; that they fland firmly settled in all vigour, which the boly fathers full of the boly gboft, have estabilshed. Mark how common it is to ascribe the decrees of the councils to the affiftance of the boly ghoft, to whom to ascribe any thing that might be an error, is a great facrilege. Also St. Leo, ep. 84. ad anost. calls the canons of the holy fathers made by the spirit of God, consecrated by the reverence given to them by the whole world. And Ep. 73. he faith, the council of Chalcedon was affembled by the boly ghost, that their definitions were a rule proceeding from divine inspiration. Hence St. Ambrofe Speaking of the heretics condemned by a council, lib. de fide ad gratianum, C. 9. they were not condemned by buman industry, but by the authority (more than human) of those fathers. For as St. Greg. Nazian faith, in his oration to St. Athanassus; the fathers of this council were gathered by the boly ghost. He had the same spirit that the other St. Gregory the great had, who faid, I do profess myself to reverence the first four councils as I reverence the four books of the gospel: and in the same maner I reverence the fifth council. Who soever is of another mind let bim be an anathema. li. epift. ep. 24. prope finem. And the very self same he saith again lib. 2. indiet. 11. ep. 10. ad fabinum. And Juftin the emperor before him, made this faying famous by inferting it into the law, authenticarum collat. 9 de eccl. tit. c. 1. we receive the doctrine of the faid (four first) councils as we receive the boly scriptures. Unless perhaps, John the second (bishop of Rome) who lived and died in the days of this emperor (an. 532.) epift. ad liberium feverinum, &c. gave occasion to this faying, by these following words fpoken of the first four councils: ted a to appropriate to a way or a total in a taken this!

this is the ground of our faith; this is the most firm rock of our belief. Behold how he relies on the councils, as St. Paul feems to teach, when he calls the church the pillar and ground of the truth. From this the councils are called by antiquity, rules of faith, as you have heard already out of St. Cyril, and St. Lee. So vincentins livinenfis adverfus berefes, speaking of the council of ephefus, says, where question was made de fanciendis fidei regulis, of establishing the rules of faith. So Cassiador. Inftitut, divin. l. 1. C. 11. and that no miftake in the rales of faith may burt you, read over the councits of ephefus and chalcedon. Yet more fully spoke pope Gelasius an. 490. epist. 11. ad episcopos dardania, where giving a reason why, after the definition of a general council in any point of faith, that point ought never again to be questioned, no not fo much as in another council; for, fays he otherwife no constitution of the church should be stable, if men coase not to rise up against the foundation of truth, contra fundamentum veritatis fe attollere : calling thus the definitions of councils the very foundations of truth.

g. When thou shalt have read but this small part of authorities for the infallibility of the church representative, or assembled in a general council, thou wilt stand assonished to read in some of our adversaries, that there is no mention at all in antiquity of the infallibility of the church: for thou feest here, first, how councils are called purposely to end all controversies in faith, by defining what is to be believed by all; that is, what is to be undoubtedly held as divine truth, revealed by God. All the fathers, who assembled to define this, did assume an unquestionable authority to their assembly to do this; upon this authority they passed their votes, in order to make a definition of what was to be proposed to all men living then, and e-

TAU

ver

and

bel

bee

unj

to-

gre

WIC

pre

riti

cut

Del

be

una

tha

lie,

ver

pul

and

ed

cils

tho

tru

lia

for

per

tio

tio

ful

fin

to

CUI

thi

ang

of

F

ver to live in the church hereafter; even curfing and excommunicating all, who should at any time believe contrary to what they defined; which had been a most facrilegious, and impious, and a most unjust and tyrannical act; and the most destructive to the church that could be invented, if, by fo great an authority, a precedent were given, and a wide gap opened to press errors, upon all the world present and to come, to be believed as divine verities revealed by God. The most bloody persecution of tyrants could never have been half for pernicious to the church, as would have been to be compelled by general councils (that is, by the unanimous consent of christendom) to embrace that as a divine verity, which is, in real truth, a lie, fathered upon God. Surely a practice to universal, so frequent, so pernicious, so notoriously public, would have been cried out upon over and over again by the most zealous, and most learned ancient fathers; who notwithstanding never opened their mouths against this proceeding of councils: for those proceedings could not be justifiable. though those councils had defined nothing but truth at the prefent; but lo, that they had been liable to define falfity; because thus they did settle for even a court, which by way of course should perpetually be called and affembled, for the definition of matters of greatest moment, which definitions, under pain of excommunication were to be submitted unto by all the world: now if these definitions could be errors, this was nothing elfe but to take the furest course they could invent, to circumvent all ages into insurable errors. And yet this was the proceeding of the pureft antiquity; and this course they held the best to preferve purity of faith. And, as you have feen, the most Holy Fathers reverenced with highest respect all the ge-NK

tl

800

11

ti

A

C

t

2

b

f

0

2

n

fi

n

i

Pfi

jı

ir

d

to

0

tł

th

of

01

CC

neral councils, which had passed before, or in their days, leaving us example to shew the like re. spect to all which have passed, or may pass in our days. For the authority given by God is equally given to other as lawful councils: to wit, the infallible authority of judging right by the affistance of the Holy Ghost, so often insisted upon by the Fathers now cited. Whence it is, that if you read histories of all ages, you shall never meet with any man (held for Catholic) who ever open. ed his mouth, I do not fay, to cry down, but even in the least degree to call in question the truth of any thing which he knew to be defined by a lawful general council. What boldness then is it, after the authority of so great a council, that they make new disputations and questions? faith St. Atha. Epill. ad Epiel. And yet this boldness your doctors allow, when they permit any one to review councils, to fee whether they be conformable to Gods word, as I shewed, feet. 1. N. 4. But, as it is faid in the epistle of Julius ad Diaconum Flaccillum, &c. registred in St. Atbanasius's apologia 2. Every s. nod bas an unaviolable authority, and that judge is contumeliously dealt withall, whose judgment by others is again examined. There is extant in the council of Chalcedon, Act. 3. that excellent edid, in which are these words expresly declaring, that councils are to end controversies; let all prophant contention cease, for he is truly impious and sacrilegious, who, after the judgment paffed by so many priefts, referves any thing to be bandled further by bis own private judgment. And yet you will prefume to referve the final review, and the approving or reproving all the definitions of the council, by your private judgment of discretion, if that lead you to conceive you have that clear scripture on your side. He was the chief bishop of the church, and prefided by his legates in the cound

12

e-

ur

n-

he

UO

et

n.

en of

ul

er ke

11

11

0-

e

at

19

1

of Chalcedon, who writ these following words to the emperor; (Leo Magnus Ep. 78. ad Leonem Augustum, C. 3.) concerning the affairs which have been defined at Nice, and at Chalcedon, we dare not undertake a new treaty, questioning again those things as if they were either doubtful or of weak Brength, which so great an authority by the Holy Ghost bas settled. What he dared not do, any cobler amongst you dares venture on. But very truly faid Gelasius (whom I cited in the end of the last number) the doing of this is the undoing of all councils; for no constitution of the church should be stable, if men cease not to rise up against the foundation of truth; for fo he called the definition of a general council almost twelve hundred years ago. You, who make these definitions fallible, make them no definitions; for they never put a final end to the controversy, they never do terminate any point; for after their determinations, as if they were no determinations, you call all to your private review; and there, what you really think fit, your judgment of discretion (without any judgment and discretion) freely rejecteth and disbelieves.

6. I say not this rashly, for, as St. Bernard saith in a sermon upon the resurrection; what greater pride can there be, than that one mon should prefer bis judgment before a whole congregation? it is sine doctrine, that you and I should sit down, and call to our examen the definitions and determinations of a general council. Have we such assistance of the Holy Ghost as councils have? have we half the authority, or any thing like to the one quarter of the wit, or learning, or knowledge, or judiciousness which they have? let, I pray, us two rather sit down, and examine how true this is which I shall now say; either the determinations of councils in points of saith (for of these salways speak)

speak) be such as are evidently against clear scripture; or elfe the texts, to which we think the council to be contrary, be not clear and evident to the contrary; which if they be not, it would be a shameless imprudence in you and me, to think we hould furer hit right upon the meaning of obscure texts in scripture, than a whole general council (the greatest authority in Christendom) has done. But now if the places allegable against the councils be evidently clear, do you think to perfuade any prudent and pious man, that this evident clearness could not be feen by so very many, and those so very eminent for piety, and for prudence, as are known to have fubscribed to fo many general councils; who could use, and are to be judged to have used all the best rules to understand scripture as well we two? God give us humility, God give us charity, God have mercy on us in the bitter day of his judgment, if we pass so bitter a judgment against the whole church representative: and yet if you pals not this judgment, you will never pals this objection without being poled.

Sect. 19.

This court in deciding controversies rules berself by the word of God written and unwritten; and why she rules berself by tradition.

1. IT was a very gross proceeding in Calvin, L. 4. Inft. C. 1. Sect. 7. G. C. 3. Sect. 2. So to propose our doctrine, as if we taught, that our church might define and determine what she thinks sit, without any relation to the word of God. No less grossly did your Zanchius, Tom. 8. Tract. de Strip. 2. 3. go about to persuade his reader, that we hold the authority of the Roman church greater than that of Christ, and the gospel; whereas we all hold that every general council is to examine

mine controversies belonging to faith, according to the word of God. But, because all human learning, wit, and judgment would still be liable to error, we say, that Christ, of his goodness, has obtained for his church (thus lawfully assembled,) such an assistance of the Holy Ghost, as shall ever preserve it from error. True it is, that in wit, and judgment, and learning, so great an assembly far excels your private ministers, but this assistance of the Holy Ghost is an advantage surpassing all that is human: this assistance we have proved in the last question, and in the last section we showed this assistance given to general councils.

0

.

3

0

t

15

2. Now to fee what the councils on their part are to do; I must tell you, that their chief businels is to examine the points in controverly; hearing all that occurs for the one fide and the other, and permitting several replies, if any remain, in due time to be made. After this diligence is used, they confider what feems most conformable to the word of God, and every ones vote is to pass upon this particular. But here I must tell you, that by the word of God, all councils, and orthodox believers have ever understood, not only Gods written word contained in fcripture, but also his unwritten word made known to the church by only tradition; which tradition also is, and was ever accounted by the church the very best and surest interpreter of The votes therefore of the fathers the scripture. affembled in council are demanded, not only of what they think to be conformable to Gods word written in scripture, but also how conformable fuch a point is, or is not, to that tradition which they have all received from the fathers of their church, as delivered to them from their fathers for God's word, by tradition committed to their

forefathers as fuch, from the apostles themselves. So for example, if in-a council there does arise a question, whether we are to pray for the dead, or to adore the facrament, or to confess our fins to a priest; the council asks the prelates of Italy, Britain, Spain, Polonia, Greece, &c. What in each one of their respective nations, so vastly different from one another, has been the ancient practice and belief amongst them? and whether at any time such a point was ever said to have been introduced among them as a novelty? or contrariwife, that no other beginning of that practice could be ever heard of than the first beginning of christian religion? now when by the unanimous answer of all the prelates of Italy, Spain, Britain, Polonia, Greece, &c. It is constantly averred that in all these so vastly distant nations, prayer for the dead, adoration of the facrament, auricular confession, were ever, time out of mind, practifed and believed, and no time in any one of those nations can be found, in which this practice and belief was held to be introduced as a novelty; but contrarywife they are, and ever were (as far as they can hear of) esteemed to have been delivered to them, together with all the other points of christian faith, when this faith was first planted in each one of those nations. It cannot but then appear evidently credible unto the council, that these doctrines and practices are apostolical, whence accordingly they pass their votes to define them. So that when their votes are past and gathered, this only, and nothing but this, the catholic church does do by the decrees of her council; that what before they had received by only tradition from their ancestors, that now they leave configned in authentical writing to all posterity. These are the very words of Vincentius Lirinensis, Advers. Hæreses, neither could I devise any fitter for our doctrine. 3. H

3. If you ask, why the church or councils efteem tradition to much? I answer first, because in prudence, and piety, they cannot but esteem as much Gods unwritten word, as his written; feeing that the word of a true honest man, is as much to be esteemed true, when it is only to be delivered by word of mouth, as when it is delivered by writing. Your ministers usually so confound the bufiness, that they make their auditors even to startle. when they tell them, that we hold tradition equal to scripture; because first, they have deeply imprinted in their minds, that tradition is nothing but an old tale fet on foot by I know not whom: but if they meant to deal really, they should say what the truth is; that we do indeed equalize tradition to fcripture, and that we have all reason to do so. Why, what is scripture? God's word written. What is tradition? the same God's word notified. not by writing, but by the full report of the catholic church. I pray now how do we wrong God. when we fay of his word, what we fay of the word. of one, whom we most commend for truth, that his word only spoken, and not written, is as sure. or true (and consequently as much to be esteemed, and credited) as any word of his that is writteneven with his own hand? nay, I pray mark how you wrong God, who flight tradition, which is. nothing but the word of God unwritten. What wrong is it to an honest man, to slight all he says. unless he confirms it by writing? I know the best answer you have to justify yourselves is; that scripture is assuredly known to us to be God's own word; but as for our traditions, you do not know, nor cannot believe that God does own them for his own word. But give me leave to ask, whence are you affured that the scripture is God's own word? your best, and indeed your only, affurance is, that

91

f

2

b

0

h

P

C

n

V

ra

41

h

de

th

b

m

is

th

ly

th

th

G

its

OF

ba

3.

th

Pr

all the christian world faith so; see feel. 20. N. s. That then which makes you, with fo great affurance, know God's written word, is tradition: but the fame tradition, which tells us that the apostles delivered these points to us as divine verities, in writing; tells us also, that the same apostles delivered these and these points to us as divine verities by word of mouth only. If the tradition of the church be a liar in this last part, she may as well be a liar in the first part. When you behere scripture, you trust to tradion, testifying that the apostles gave such and such books to the church of the first age to be believed as God's word; fee two admirable places of St. Austin pressing this hard which I will cite presently, N. 7. Again, when you believe that the copies, which we have now of those books, be neither forged, ner corrupted copies, but do truly agree with the originals given out by the apostles; you again trust to the traditions of all the after churches that have been in every age from the apostles to this very present church. For it was as much in the power of the church in any one of these ages, to have thrust a false copy into your hand, in place of a true one, as to thrust a false tradition into the mouth of every catholic every where, in place of a true one. Admirably Tertullian (de Præscript. c. 28. How is it likely that so many and so great churches should err in one faith? among many events there is not every where one iffue. The errors of the churches (had there been any in the delivering of these traditions) must needs bave varied, (for though every man should agree to tell his child a lie, yet every one would not agree in telling just the very self same lies:) but that which among it many is found one, is not mistaken, (as a fure tradition) delivered : audeat ergo ali-Quis.

quis dicere eos erreffe qui tradiderunt? Dare then any man say that they all erred vaho delivered (with such uniformity) this tradition? so he, holding it, as you see, impudence to say this tradition could be fallible. Is not this clearly to hold the tradition of so many and so great churches infattible? behold here then plain Popery in the highest point proved and approved within two hundred years after Christ. But more of Fertullians opinion concerning tradition hereaster, sect. 20. N. 4. and much has been said, sect. 12. N. 4, 5.

4. My talk now is, to thew tradition does convey and bring down God's word to us as fure, yea rather furer, by perpetual practice, and uniform doctrine, than by any writing. To flew this, I brought many strong arguments, feet. 10. N. 13. and feel. 16. N. 1. 2. In both which sections I have faid many things of traditions; and in the first place I resolved the chief objections against them. But yet I will clear this, and one or two other doubts which trouble many. For clearing then of this doubt, let us take two traditions, one confessed by you to be a true one, the other to be proved by me to be no lefs true than the former, because it is tellified by as good a tradition as the former; and therefore either the former is not proved fufficiently by this testimony, or else the fatter is. Yet the truth is (and my argument shall make it good) that both of them are made as credible to be God's word by tradition only, as any writing by its fole force could make them. The first tradition which I will, for example fake, take, is the baptizing of children (of which I fpoke, feet. 8. N. 3.) The second, is of praying for the dead. Of these two I discourse to my purpose thus: both these points (fay 1) were for divine verities and practices recommended by the apostles to the primilive

bi

711

A

h

b

al

01

h

th

ck

tr

10

fa

pa

CT

el

ar

Cu

fa

tb

ch

in

it

nc

W

al

fa

tb

gi

de

fu

15

th

ch

th

mitive church, and so from hand to hand came most undoubtedly delivered down to us. Hence, conformable to this tradition, every where the christians baptized their little children, every where they prayed for the faithful departed. Nothing more common to all men than to be born, nothing more common than to die, for every one who is born; hence, as the daily custom is of being born, fo the daily custom in all the churches, is to baptize those who are newly born; and as it is the daily custom for all that are born to die; so the daily custom was to pray for the dead. But yet prayer for the dead was, by more frequent practice, testified in this respect, because those who are born, are baptized but once in their lives; but those who are dead are many times, and that for many years after their death, prayed for by name, besides the daily prayers for all the faithful departed in general. Well now, let us suppose that both these traditions be called in question whether they be faithful deliverers of the true word of God; or rather, in place of it, deliver some human invention; as you will fay, praying for the dead is, and the anabaptists will say, that baptizing of children is. Let us now, further see, which of these two traditions cannot defend itself from forgery, as well as any scripture questioned of being true scripture: for example, the Apocalyps, or Revelation with your Lutberan brethren hold not to be true scripture. How will you defend the Apocalyps? you can fay no more than I have faid, feA. 3. N. 12. For all our canon in general, and the tradition upon which those councils received the Apocalyps had more contradiction, than ever prayer for the dead had. For the Apocalyps was not only rejected by the most ancient Heretics, the Marcionists, the Alogians, the Theodocians; but

but also by divers ancient Catholics (especially the Grecians, as St Ferome testifies Epift. ad. Dardanum.) But prayer for the dead was contradicted by no Catholic at all; amongst ancient Heretics, Aerius indeed did contradict it; but this is noted in him as a peculiar herefy of his own invention, both by St. Austin (whose words I gave you sett. 1. fine.) and St. Epiphanius, Herefy 75. faith, this Aerius bad an Aerian wicked spirit against the church; and then he denounceth against him, that prayers do profit the dead. And the same faint there says, the church does this necessarily (this is his word) by the tradition received from ber ancestors. And he not long after (Herefy 77.) does profess, that every man falls into strange inconveniencies, if be will but once pass the bounds set bim by the boly church, and leap over the bedges of traditions. He held therefore prayer for the dead fuitable to the doctrine of the church, and tradition. And as for St. Austin (Chap. 1. de cura pro mortuis agenda) He fays, that the universal church did Shine with this custom of praying for the dead at the altar. The greatest doctors of the church could not be ignorant of a custom spining in the church, not particular but universal. And it is this shining of this custom which I press, and not St. Austin's authority, otherwise than as a witness of this spining tradition. He also ferm. 32. de verbis opostoli (which place Bede. 1. Thef. 4. almost a thousand years ago cited out of St. Austin) fays thus: by the prayers of the boly church, and by the wholfome facrifice, and by the alms which are given for their fouls, it is not to be doubted but the dead are belped; so that our Lord deals more mercifully wish them than their fins have deferved. Why is not this to be doubted of? it follows, because this, delivered down from our fathers, the whole church does observe. See St. Chrys. testimony of this tradition in the next feet. N. 4. And this tradition -

t

divion is that which I now fland upon, which isdeed did thing in the practice of the primitive church. You fhalt not find one liturgy, or fervice book, wied in the ancient church, which is not wirness of this tradition; though these books were found in every parish of Christendom in which divine service was almost daily faid. Tentultion (who lived within less than a hundred and fifty years after the cason of feripture was finished) does number up this cultom of prayer for the dead among the ancient traditions; de corona milit. c. 3. It is ordinary in law (for proof of long poffellion) to find witnesses testifying what was done, not only fifty, but also three or four score years ago: wherefore even two or three handing of this tradition by fuch aged hands, would reach down this practice from St. John the evangelist's time to Tertullian. And it is but a frast allowance to sthing tellified to be a tradition to allow it three or four defeents (can the authenticalness of the apocalyps be better proved, going upwards to the apostles, than this?) I am fure baptifm for children cannot. Again, in both these points it is a most strong argument (and as strong for prayer for the dead, as for the other) that no time can be named in which these customs began: no man can be thought of, who could by human means (and fuch means as should not make a mighty noise amongst those great reverencers of tradition) draw all the world, in fo front a time after the apostles, to follow customs as apostolical which then, that is, in that age in which they were first vented, were evidently by every man, not only known, but clearly feen to be new hatched novelties; and not antient and apostolical tradition. This man who broached this false doctrine should nave been put in the catalogues of Heretics by St. Epiphanius and St. Austin; whereas they did not only

only not put him down for an Heretic, but they both did put down Aerius for one, because he taught the contrary. Now if you speak of these cultoms, going downward, until the age in which they began to be denied by Anabaptists, or Protestants; prayer for the dead has come down with such a full stream, that it drew all countries in all ages with it; in so much that every where (but among a few late born Arminians and Albigonfes). the public service-books in all parishes of all countries can be as fure witnesses of this custom, as the copies of age after age can testify we have the true copy of the Apocalyps. And fo old Rituals will testify (though not so fully) baptism of chidren, by witnessing the ceremonies observed in such baptilms. And, as for prayer for the dead, the very stones cry out in all old monuments, for our prayers for throse who lie interred under them. The oldest foundations are those, which our greatest grandfathers made (as appears by the most ancient records) for the obtaining prayers for their fouls: and this not in one country but there is not one country, which abounds not with such montiments, and fuch records, the very strongest proofs of affured antiquity and unquestionable tradition.

dition shining in perpetual practice in all times, and all ages, is a surer relater and reporter, than a testimony in writing; which, if ancient, must also have the prime testimony (witnessing it to be uncorrupt) from tradition. And hence also you clearly see, that scripture, true or false, can be no better known to be so than true tradition from salse; for if tradition could be false in any point so universally current, it might bear witness to a salse for inture, and deny due approbation to many

true ones,

3

6. When then we are demanded, how we can know a true tradition from a false one? we anfwer, first, that we can do this better than you can know true books, and true copies of true books of scripture, from false; for, before you can do either of these, you must first know true tradition from false; that hence you may, not conjecturally, but affuredly fay, thefe are the true books of scripture, these are the true copies of these true books, because true tradition recommends them for fuch: these be false books, or false copies of thue books, because the tradition, which recommends these, is false. Tell me the means by which infallibly the true tradition in this point may be known from the false; and that very means I will affign to know, in other points true tradition from false. Secondly, I shall shew, that we have better means to do this, than all the world had to know their true traditions from false, for the first two thousand years, before the time of Moses. Third. ly, I answer directly, by assigning this means, which is, when a doubt begins to be far spread in the church concerning any tradition, to call a general council, and there, by the examination inflituted by men most knowing of antiquity in general, and particularly well versed in the received, and approved old customs of their countries. For the countries of those in the council being fo far distant, and so wholly independent one of another, cannot possibly have all of them received, and that without any known opposition in any one of them, one and the very felf fame tradition, from any other hands but from those, from whom they received their whole faith, and this particular tradition for part of it. For had the beginners and fowers of this tradition, now questioned, been after the first planters of our faith, there would in fome

h

0

0

n

f

le

1

le

ls

1-

e

11

W

0

1.

n

e-

d,

10

11

r,

at

n,

0-

e-

i-

f-

10

ne

fome country or other, be found out fome author of this first tradition; there would be some fame good or bad of that man, who was able to perfuade a phanfy of his own to be Apostolical doctrine, and to be firmly held so by all the world, without opposition in any part thereof, even though this tradition (as you fay of most of our traditions) had a direct opposition to the ancient doctrine of the apostles. Which doctrine, when our traditions were held for Apostolical, was too too fresh to be so foon forfaken, and that fo eafily, and fo generally, without any opposition. Now when the gravest Prelates from all parts of the world affembled. having instituted an exact process of the true antiquity and universality of the tradition questioned; and in this process, found an unanimous consent of all kind of testimories, from all corners of the world: it is now juridically and notoriously made evident, that fuch a point has come down to us by a true tradition; and for that very reason, is a true object of faith, being the word of God, delivered by as faithful a mellenger, as the very copies of scripture are. And thus, when it was grown doubtful in the church, whether fuch and fuch books, were part of the true canon of scripture; the tradition which recommended these books, was examined in the third council of Carthage, in which St. Austin was present, and there (as I shewed feet. 3. N. 12.) all the books of our canon (so different from yours,) were found to be recommended to the church, by a true and authentical tradition; and therefore we embrace them as the word of God: tradition being as credible a relator of Gods word, delivered by the apostles to the church, as any writing.

7. Whence again, you need not wonder to see that by us, and by the fathers, cited in the next section, Num. 4. Tradition is equallized to scrip-

true,

k

W

G

h

V

1

10

th

b

hi

h

de

be

CC

m

hi

in

ab

ty

60

le1

au

ri

ed

pa:

fol

cu

mt

au

flet

has

W

mi

wh

tan

ture, for this is nothing elfe, but to hold that the word of God delivered by tradition, is as fure mellenger as any writing can be, and is to be believed as much as the word of God, thelivered by writing, and such a writing as has no farer witness of being authentical than tradition. Hence St. An-Thin (de utilit. oredendi G. 14.) disputing with an Heretic, who would first have him to believe foripture before catholic tradition, makes the Henric speak thus, believe this writing. Then he replies, but every writing, if it be new and unbeard of, recommended by a few, no other reason confirming it. we do not believe the variting; but we believe those who bring farth this writing; noberefore if you (Lutherans, Calvins, &c.) bring forth this writing, you being fo few and fo unknown (for where were you these last thousand years before Luther?) I have no mind to believe you. Now because the Heretic knew not how to press St. Austin, to give first credit to this writing or scripture, by faying, that all of his religion, faid it was the word of God, without proffing him with the teltimony of all the christian world by universal tradition. St. Austin prevents him, by telling him, well, you will fend me to the multitude and fame fof church tradition;) but I pray, rather admonish me to feek out the chief leaders of this multitude, and to feek them out most diligently and most laboriously, that from these (governors of the churches) nather than from you: I may learn fomething of these wistings; for if thefe men bad not been, I should never have known that there had been at all any thing to be learned (concerning these scriptures:) truly, in my mind this, not only authority, but this most preffing reason of St. Austin convinceth, that the governors of this multitude of all true believers, (efpecially affembled in one council together) are the best guides God has given us upon earth, both to know

know which is scripture, or the true word of God written; and which tradition, or the true word of God un-written; and also to know most affuredly, how this word of God is rightly understood. Wherefore, presently the same St. Austin (Cap. 15.) does admonish us for the avoiding of all ertors, as the easiest means thereunto, willingly to obey the precepts of that catholic church, precepts made by her with fo great an authority. And then in his fixteenth chapter, he clearly tells us, that God having given us this authority, we ought not to despair of an infallible means to know the truth; because this authority is that very infallible means confirmed by miracles, and by the miraculous multitude, following it so extreamly against all human interest. Thus then he discourseth, for if the divine providence of God does not prefide in buman affairs, in vain would follicitude be about religion: but if both the very outward beautwof all things, and our inward conscience does both publickly and privately exbort us to feek out and ferve God, we are not to despair, that there is some authority appointed by the same God, on which authority we relying, as on an affured step, may be lift. ed up to God. This authority moves us by two ways, partly by miracles, partly by the multitude of its. followers. Behold here an authority appointed by God, an authority, on which we may most fecurely rely, and not only not get a fall (flipping into errors) by leaning upon it confidently; but an authority, on which we relying, as on an assured flep, may be lifted up to God, who with miracles: has confirmed this authority to be most secure. Whence prefently, St. Aufin tells us how those miracles have drawn fo great a multitude. But whether this multitude were Catholics or Proteftants, you shall know them by their fruits, for

they bad a temperance extended to fasting with bread and water; and not only daily fasts, but fasts continued for many days. A chaftity disdaining the bay. ing wife or children; a patience flighting crosses and flames; a liberality reaching forth to the distributing out to the poor their whole patrimonies. These things we see still daily among Catholics; and though (as St. Austin adds) but few do these things, yet all people praise them, approve them, love them, none accounted them superstitious in those days, When we see then so great hope from God, so great profit and fruit, shall we doubt to betake ourselves to the lap of that church, which even by the confession of mankind from the apostolic feat (so antiquity useth to call the feat of the bishop of Rome (by succession of bishops, bas obtained the top of authority; Heretics in vain barking round about it, but condemned partly by the judgment of the people (upon tradition) partly by the gravity of councils, partly by the majesty of miracles; to which church, not to give the first place, is truly a thing either of greatest impiety, or of beadlong arrogancy. So he. So I. So we all.

fe

V

u

th

th

of

be

W

th

YO

for

mi

of

an

it

PU

me

mi

wb

libl

No

wh

the

8. I have put down the place more fully, because Dr. Fern seel. 30. would disprove our tenets by the deep filence of them in antiquity, and particularly in St. Austin, whom I shall shew also prefently (feet. 21. n. 5. 6.) in a dozen places of his works to hold distinctly this infallibility of the church in her traditions and doctrine. Well then the being as infallible in delivering the unwritten word of God, as in delivering the written word the prelates affembled in her councils, have as much reason to rule themselves, and their subjects by the one as by the other. By a writing only, we never knew any common wealth governed. By tradition only, the whole english nation has kept our common law, which was never written by the lawd

d

e

1,

s.

to

n

h

on

eed

n)

be

ty,

9.14

e-

ets

ar-

re-

his

the

nen

ten

ord

25

eds

we

By

cept

the

W-

law-makers themselves: yet is made no less known by only tradition, than our flatute laws, which were delivered in writing by the law-makers. But what, speak I of one nation? the whole church through the whole world was governed by tradition only, for the first two thousand years; tradition, partly by writing, then partly by governed for above two thousand years more; towit, for the second two thousand years from Moses until Christs time. See sect. 16. N. 1. now from the preaching of Christ unto the finishing of the canon, and the divulging of the fame in fuch languages as all nations understood. very many years passed, and all the true believers in Christs church were governed by tradition only: fee feel. 16. N 2. and whereas some of our adverlaries obscurely answer, that the word of God was in Substance before Christs church, which (fay they) was beggotten by it. We reply clearly to them thus: when (fay we) you speak of the word of God, which was before scripture, and which begot the church, you speak of the unwritten word of God: this unwritten word is that very thing which we call tradition. And indeed, when you speak of such a word, as must be sufficient for an exterior and infallible direction for fo many millions (as were to be directed by it in the way of falvation before the scripture was all written and divulged in such languages that might make it fit to direct all nations) you must of necessity put this word of God outwardly expressed by some meams or other, expressing it in such a manner, as might be able to produce this effect of guiding whole millions in the way of falvation, by an infallible belief of all that God had faid by that word. Now (I pray) find me out any word of God, any where existent before scripture, in a manner fit for the end I now speak of, except this word be granted

tl

il

16

ir

fe

at

CE

ki

ne

10

eul

16

fu

as by

cef

ane

17

poi

in t

tur ble

jeE

to rule

be

wh:

ing

WIII

are (

ed to have wholly existed in the oral tradition of the church of those times. You all say, Gods word revealed, is the ground of all faith. All these millions of the true believers in those ages had true faith; therefore they had Gods word revealed, and revealed in a sufficient manner to ground divine saith. But they had Gods word revealed by oral tradition only; therefore Gods word, revealed by oral tradition only, is a sufficient ground to ground divine saith; which it could not be, were it not infallible, in what it delivers for Gods word; and what is thus delivered (by being so delivered) is a sit object of divine saith, such as

they all had in those ages ..

o. This then is the first reason why the church in her councils directs her felf as well by the unwritten, as by the written word of God, because the one is as truly in it felf the word of God, and as fufficiently notified to us to be so by tradition, as the scripture is notified to be so by writing; for which cause, holy fathers still taught those things which we know by tradition only, to be believed and held equally to those things which we know by scripture. See feet. 20. N. 4. a second reason why this church not only does, but of necessity must direct and govern herself not by scripture only but also by unwritten traditions, is, because scripture only does not deliver down unto us all points necessary for the whole church, and all the members thereof; as I have at large shewed, Quest. 2. naming no fewer than four and twenty of those neceffary points. All these points being wholly necessary, and errors being no where more dangerous than in points wholly necessary, there does arise an unavoidable necessity to grant, that the first church planted by the apostles, received her necessary direction and infallible instruction in these points by

by tradition only; for manifest it is, that they at the first received from the apostles, all compleat instruction in necessary points: and again, it is no less manifest, that they received no such compleat instruction in scripture concerning those twenty four points, for then we should be able to find this instruction in scriptures, which we not being able to do, we must perforce grant, that they received this instruction by tradition expressed in no kind of scripture, but such as commanded in geneneral all men to bold the traditions delivered to them, 2Thef. 2. And that the' an angel from Heaven should teach the contrary, or besides what they received, they should account bim anathema, gal. 8. and again, bave thou the form of found words which thou hast beard of me, 2 tim. 1. 13. and yet again c. 2. the things which thou hast heard (he faith not read) of me by many witnesses, these commend to faithful men which shall be fit to teach others also. Now as the first age received their necessary instruction by being fent to no other rule of faith in these neceffary points than the tradition of the church, and by this only were most compleatly instructed in divine faith; fo now this present church in all points not clearly expressed in scripture, and also in that prime point of rightly interpreting the scripture itself, has recourse to tradition as to an infallible rule, able to make all that it teacheth a fit object of divine and infallible faith.

10. A third reason why councils may and ought to propose tradition to themselves for an infallible rule of faith, is this, because that rule must needs be infallible by which only we can be assured what the apostles both by writing, and out of writing did teach to the church: for in their doctrine written and unwritten all things belonging to faith are contained; that therefore which infallibly teacheth us this, and is also the only thing which teach-

Æ

y

b

t

T

U

b

b

b

t

f

S

1

t

21

eth us this must needs be the infallible rule of faith: but tradition is the only thing which teacheth us this; to-wit, what the apostles did teach us both by writing and by word of mouth without writing: which this tradition performs by millions of true believers of the first age, all taken apart las witnesses use to be to find out how well they all agree in their testimony) and placed in several parts in the world, many vaftly distant from one another, and yet all delivering the same things to those other millions, who in greater number succeeded them in life, and in delivering the same things, in the same manner to new millions of their posterity, all constantly agreeing in the testification of the very felf same points, all affirming them to have been delivered publickly in churches, and greatest assemblies every where all their country over; and that so very exceeding often, and by so very many, and by so very divers persons of all kinds of conditions, that it is more possible for all men in the world to fall into a fit of dancing just for a quarter of an hour at one and the felf same time, without ever agreeing to do fo before-hand; than it is possible for all these millions of men in so different places, and of so different judgments by nature, and so contrary in their humours, inclinations, and proceedings, to conspire thus in one and the fame flory containing so many particulars, with out that thing had been really and notoriously true, which so many millions, taken in so different circumstances, all testified unanimously to be true. If this does not make it evidently credible that the apostles taught this, I dare say, that no miracle which God can do, without forcing our wills, can make this point evidently credible unto us. Neither have we any thing elfe but this tradition which makes it eveidently credible to us what the apostles did teach the first church by writing, and by

of

h-

ch

ut

ns

rt

ey

2

10

to

C-

ie

IF

n

n

d

0

e

by fuch writings, and by fuch and fuch things delivered only by word of mouth. Wherefore either by fuch a testimony as this, or by no testimony at all, we may be induced to believe infallibly, that the apostles did teach such and such things by word of mouth, and also did write such and such books. And it is most preposterous to believe for this testimony this last part, and not to believe the first part; yea, this is plain contradiction in him who understands what he does: for on the one side he faith, the testimony of tradition sufficeth to make a thing a fit object of divine faith, fo that upon this testimony only I may build that infallible affent, by which I believe these and these books to have been delivered by the apostles; and yet I will not believe, that the apostles delivered by word of mouth the doctrine of praying for the dead, of baptifing infants, &c. because this self same testimony of tradition sufficeth not to make a thing a fit object of faith, to which before I faid it did suffice. How then come I now to say it does not. fuffice, and to contradict myfelf with the fame breath? I end with doctor Ferns onwn words, Sect. 2. It is impossible that all the christian churches which began in and about the apostolical times, and so succeeded through all nations and ages, should be either deceived in what they unanimously witnessed, or agree all of them to deceive thole who followed them.

Sect. 20.

That the fathers teach thefe traditions, and the definitions of the councils or church to be infallible.

IN TE must first correct the error of some apprehensions, who do not conceive such authorities of fathers to speak home to our purpose, unless they say plainly, the church is infallible The

The fathers did conceive themselves in their writings to speak to men capable so far of reason, as to be able to deduce a clear evident consequence, when they are compleatly surnished with the principles. From which it must needs sollow, you shall not perhaps find a clear place that saith the aposses were infallible; yet we have evident principles from whence we deduce that verity. Note that we now vulgarly use this word infallible, because no word more sully, and briefly expressent our mind. The thing meant by this word, was by most equivalent expressions, set down to the ve-

F

t

k

t

V

0

e

f

C

11

n

fa

77

60

fa

W

r

fa

fu

ry full by antiquity.

2. I will shew this clearly by what I have already shewed antiquity to affirm concerning the infallibility of councils, in the last fection but one. There you shall see Constantine praised by antiquity for reverencing the sentence of the first council as if it bad been spoken by Gods own mouth, and punishing the gainsayers of it as violators of a divine law. Is not this a full acknowledgment of infallibility? As also when St. Athanasius calls this difinition, the word of God. Is not the like fully acknowledgment which was shewed there, to be made by St. Hormisda, believing the boly ghost to have spoken in the fathers of that council, and by St. Cyril, affirming them to have been inspired by the boly shoft that they should not swarve from truth baving the boly ghost speaking in them; and calling their definitions, the rule of pure faith, which nothing can be but what is infallible. The same is spoken equivalently when he fays agin, that Christ did preside invisibly in that council in which the embassadors of the bishop of Rome presided visibly. The fame is done by St. Leo, affirming, that to be fettled by the boly ghost which was defined by the council, and calling the cannons thereof, made by the boly ghost or spirit of God, using also the like speeches

of the definitions of the council of Chalcedon, terming them a rule proceeding from divine inspiration; is not this to acknowledge fuch a rule infallible? what more has been written of the apostles doctrine? divers other such like fayings I have there given you, out of the holy fathers, affirming lawful councils to be gathered by the holy ghost, and what was done in them not to be done by buman industry, because the fathers so assembled were full of the boly ghost. Hence also there was such reverence professed to their definitions as to the very gospels themselves, which is to express infallibility in a fuperlative degree: in which degree also I may place the fayings of those fathers, who called the definitions of councils, the ground of our faith, the rock of our belief, rules of faith, the very foundations of truth. All superlative expressions of infallibility, and yet men will please to wonder at the deep silence of fathers concerning this point, in which they could never content themselves to speak in a vulgar manner, but always in fuch a high strain of veneration, that the true believers might be not only instructed to believe, but also taught to reverence this infallibility, as the communication of the spirit of divine truth, as indeed it is: concerning. councils then what we faid in that fection containing all this here recapiulated shall suffice: Remember also what Vincentius Livinensis, c. 4. faith, all those who will not be accounted bereties must conform themselves to the decrees of general councils. Let us now fee what they fay of the infallibility of tradition, taking tradition as it contains what is not written in scripture, and yet is necessary to be believed or practifed.

3. This tradition the fathers acknowledge infallible and several ways; some of them I have sufficiently infinuated, sed. 12. where I shewed that the fathers resused to stand to scripture only, as to the only rule of faith, because all necessary principles for convincing of Heretics could not be deduced sufficiently from thence: and consequently they did hold that there was some other rule of faith, containing those principles, to wit tradition, which could not be this other rule of faith, nor furnish them sufficiently with such principles, except she, in delivering of them, were infallible. There also I shewed that the fathers held divers points necessarily to be believed or practised, for which they professed themselves to have no scripture, but only tradition: therefore they held this to be a sufficient ground of faith. There also I shewed that they held divers points to be damnable errors, which they know to be contrary to no written rule, therefore they thought it was sufficient to hold them for damnable herefies, only because they were contrary to the unwritten rule of faith, which we call tradition, which if it were a fallible rule, it might be gainfaid without falling into the damnable fin of herefy, of which fin the gainfayers of it are, for this only reason accused by the fathers. I have also feet. 16. N. 3. shewed, how manifestly. St. Ireneus teacheth the unwritten rule of tradition (and such tradition as was really in the church then existent,) to be a sufficient rule, and ground for divine faith, and confequently to be infallible. In the very last feet. N 3. I gave you Tertullians plain words, condemning them who fay, the church can err in ber traditions. Tertullian, see sect. 12 N. 4. 5. In the next number following I gave you two clear places out of St. Epiphanius for our obligation to follow these traditions. Going on to the feventh Numb. I gave you not only a convincing authority, but an unan-Iwerable argument of St. Austin's for the infallibility of the church in her traditions, whose authority he teacheth to be appointed by God that there

may be some sufficient authority upon which, men relying, as upon a well assured step, may be listed up to God; and he holds it a headlong arrogancy not to rely upon it; which had been most considerately spoken, had it been only fallible. All this is already dispatched, let us now proceed to the sull consusion of these who complain of so deep silence in this point of infallibility: and because Dr. Fern, seel. 24. saith, the authorities cited by Bellarmin come not home, I will begin with some authorities taken out of him, which I shall shew to reach a-

bundantly home to our purpofe.

1

r

-

S

I

1

4. St. Denis disciple to St. Paul, c. 1. Eccl. Hieraich. faith, those our first captains of priestly function (to-wit the apostles) did deliver to us the chiefest and sutersubstantial points, partly in written, partly in unwritten institutions. So that, part of the chiefest, and consequently part of the necessary and fundamental points, were delivered to us in unwritten traditions only. If therefore this tradition be only a fallible rule, we have no infallible rule to rely upon in all points necessary, because part of them must rely upon unwritten traditions only. St. Fustin in the end of his second apologyfor the christians, among these unwritten traditions placeth fome things made necessary by apostolical precepts; as the confecrating of wine mingled with water, and that it is lawful to no body (though never fo contrite for his fins) to receive the Eucharist before baptism. Is not this necessary? and yet what scripture have you for it, and where find you in clear scripture that the apostles were baptized before they communicated in the last suppor of our lord? there follows the authority of St. Ireneus, which I have shewed to reach fo home, that the whole faith of whole nations may be divine and infallible, by relying only upon traditions, even long after the finishing the canon of icripture,

purpose: as first, when a question is asked, why we in this church (whose pedigree we can draw from the apostles) do pray for the dead? pray to faints? worship the Eucharist, &c. the very asking of this question, why do you do it? proves that we do it. And because we every where do it in the church, the observation of these practices is to stand good, because, we are babentes observationem inveteratam quæ præveniendo, flatum fecit. Hanc si nulla scriptura determinavit, certe confuetudo roboravit; que sine dubio, &c. we bave an observation which by prevention, baving got a long standing prescription, bas settled itself. And though no scripture bas determinately appointed this observance, yet custom bas given it strength; which custom without all doubt came from tradition; for bow can a thing be in practice (so universally) if it were not at first delivered by tradition? now if you fay, that even for such practices, delivered by tradition, the scripture must be alledged, all his whole following discourse is framed against this objection, and he musters up a number of things then observed by the church (that is, in the first two hundred years) without any proof of scripture, by the meer and sole title of tradition. Thus much is very home Mr. Doctor; as also that among those most primitive observances he placeth, offering for the dead, and the even wearing out our forebead with making the fign of the cross at all kind of works we be begin: and though a man may be faved who doth not practife thefe things, yet they being apostolical institutions, how can a man be faved who contemns them? it was not in vain, faith St. Chryfostom, Hom. in Ep. ad Philip. And again, Hom. 69. ad populum. It was not in vain decreed by the apostles, that in the celebration of shofe most dreadful mysteries, memory should be made of those who are dead : they knew well that much benefit

ceive

benefit and profit did bence redound unto them. See if you are fafe, who condemns that for superstitious, which the apostles decreed as most beneficial to the fouls; of which I have spoken more feel. 19. N. 4. And of St. Auftin's authority feet. 12. N. 3, 4, 5. land you must observe how he speaks of that which on the one fide he held wholly necessary, as infants baptism, not rebaptising Heretics, and yet now here fet down in scripture;) which is to come further home than Dr. Fern could wish. To these I add origen, præfat. in lib. Periarch. That only is to be believed for truth which in nothing disagrees from the tradition of the church: and in our underflanding scripture, we must not believe otherwise than the church of God has by succession delivered Wherefore if all the world understood those words, this is my body, concerning a most real corporal presence, we must not believe other-Again, because the public practice of the church does understand St. James (when he bids the priefts to be called for to anoint the fick with oil, to obtain forgiveness of their sins) to speak of a true facrament, he clearly teacheth by this her practice, that the scripture should not be understood The authorities therefore of the fathers, come home to our purpose when so often they inculcate this verity.

5. So also do those fathers who profess themselves to receive such and such books for canonical upon tradition. The very same Rusinus (who alone is found to deliver the whole canon just as you do) in the words immediately going before the naming those canonical books, speaks thus in ennarratione symboli: it seems good distinctly to set down in this place which be the volumes of the New and Old Testament, which are believed to have been inspired by the Holy Ghost (mark the ground why) according to the tradition of our ancestors, as we have re-

01

re

II

C

f

F

tl

la

Si

f

G

u

a

t

İ

0

a

ti

2

ci

u

f

g

2

L

1

I

seived them out of the monuments of our fore-fathers. Note that he here does not only take the canonical books for tradition, which most protestants will fay they themselves do, but he takes them to be canonical for tradition; and upon this ground he faith, they were believed to have been inspired by the Holy Gboft. See also what I said of the council of Carthage and others, feel. 3. Upon this ground St. Atbanasius (in fine Synopsis) receives the gospel of St. Matthew, and rejects the Gospel of St. Thomas. Upon this ground Tertullian, St. Hierom, St. Aug. St. Leo, do admit fuch books to be, and deny others to be canonical. Upon this ground St. Auftin receives the acts of the apostles. See his words feet. 22. fine. Hence also Eusebius faith in Hift. Eccl. Lib. 3. Such scriptures by tradition are beld for true, genuine, and manifestly allowed by the opinion of all, and that bence, as by an evident note or mark they are distinguished from others. Behold the most perspicuous note or mark by which scriptures could infallibly be known. If this rule be fallible, we have no infallibility of the scriptures being or not being canonical writings. None of the holy Fathers can be shewed to have let fall one word infinuating, that by the light discovered in fuch or fuch books, they were affured, and that infallibly, of their being canonical; of which I fpoke, feel. 3. SCHOOLS IN

Sect. 21.

developed the endough respire

That the Fathers teach in general the church to be infallible.

BESIDES those manifold authorities which I have cited out of the fathers, clearly teaching the church infallible in her traditions (by which and by her answerable practice, she makes known

known to her children her belief) and besides those other authorities teaching, that this church, in her representative or general councils, does with the infallible affistance of the Holy Ghost, set forth her canons, or rules for belief and practice; there be several other authorities in which the fathers. in very full expressions, declare their belief of the churches infallibility: for whenfoever the Fathers speak of the churches being to be followed by us in all things most fecurely, as being a certain guide or rule; or when they use any such kind of speech, they either mean the church representative in a lawful council, or the church universal, delivering fuch or fuch a point by tradition shining with conformable practice. Whence my reader will obferve, how the fathers (whose speeches of the church in general I am going to cite) when they use such general speeches, do confirm, by their authority, what I have faid of the infallibility of the church representative in councils, or of the like infallibility of the church universal in her traditions. And on the other fide, all those manifold authorities, by which infallibility of councils and traditions have been already confirmed by me, do also confirm this general proposition, that the church is infallible : that is, the church as well universal, speaking by tradition; as representative, speaking by a general council.

2. Of this infallibility in general thus St. Cyprian de Unitate Eccl. The church is the spouse of Christ which cannot play the adulteress. And again, Epist. 55. The church never departs from what she once has known. And St. Hierom thus, Lib. 3. in Russimum. C. 8. since. In her is the rule or square of truth. And thus also Russimus (in Ennarat. Symbol) explicating those words; I believe the Holy Catholic Church; she therefore is the Holy Church not having spot or wrinkle, words spoken

spoken of Christs visible church on Earth, as anpears as well by the words going before, which are, in this church there is one faith, one baptism; as by the words following, many others bave gathered churches together, as Marcian, Valentinus, Arius, &c. but those churches be not without foot and wrinkle. Had Christ's only church upon Earth been so foul (as you must of necessity say it was for a full thousand years before your reformation) the had notoriously played the adultress, and been indeed the whore of Babylon, as you at every occasion call the only church Christ then had, or as pure as any he then had. If this church also had interiorly departed from what she received, she had played the mistress of misrule, and not been the rule and square of truth. Lastly, she had not been without most hideous spots, and far greater deformities than wrinkles. See how you have painted her out above in my feel. 15. N. 8. How differently St. Ireneur. Lib. 3. C. 40. where the church is, there is the spirit of God; but the spirit is truth. And Lanctantius, lib. 3. cap. ult. calls the church, the well-fpring of truth, the dwelling place of faith. You, who make the church dwelling in error, fo many ages, join error, and most intollerable error, together with the spirit of truth. How was this spirit of truth in a church imposing lies (as you fay) for divine verities and exacting of all, under pain of excommunication, to submit to her proceedings herein? and yet you can find Christ no better church for the last thousand years. There be four Fathers for whose testimonies divers of our adversaries use to call, insomuch that they account their deep filence our condemnation, beccuse those Fathers have treated expresly against Heretics, and undertaken how to direct others in the true faith; and therefore doubtlefs, had they efteemed the church to have been infallible, they

would have made her direction the first rule of all. The first of these Fathers is Vincentius Lirinensis, whom I have already shewed at large to stand mainly upon this direction. See his words cited see. 7. As for the second, who is Tertullian, he lived before the church had or could have any general council, by reason of the universal persecution under those Heathenish emperors; and so Tertullian does not indeed speak of the church representative in councils; yet he speaks home of the infallibility of the church universal, declaring her doctrine by her tradition, and her practice conformable to her tradition, and in all thus declared Tertullian holds her infallible; as I have al-

ready shewed the last feet. N. 4.

3. The third Father is St. Epipbanius, who how clearly he speaks of the infallibility of the church in her traditions, we have feen in the fame number: I add here further an admirable faying of this Father of the churches infallibility; for having shewed, Heres. 49. how all heresies feek to go by new found by-ways, he calls the following of the church, that kings bigh way of which Moles spoke (mystically by the king of Edom) saying, that be would pass by that, right on to the land of Promise, neither declining at the right-hand nor the left, neither on this fide nor on that, but we will go on fireight in the kings bigh-way. For the kings high-way is the boly church of God, the road of truth. But every one of these beresses leaving this kings bigb-way, decline either on the right-hand or on the left to error. But you, O servants of God, you fons of the church of God, who have known the fure rule, and do go on in the way of truth, go on chearfully, and be not called back by their words and clamours, for their ways be erroneous. So he. Here you have, that all herefies agree in this, that they leave the infallible direction of the church,

and become Heretics by chooling out ways on their own head, erroneous ways, which in the church never could have been met withal, she being the kings bigb-way, the beaten road of truth, the fure rule, the way of truth. What more clear? to take the churches direction as infallible, is the very bane of Christendom, with doctor Fern; with others it is the most intolerable error in popery, making all the errors incurable; and yet this ancient holy Father, who (as St. Austin in his book of heresies saith) is the most learned man that had written of herefies, reprehends all and every one of these heresies, for erring, by refusing to follow the church, as a fure rule, and as the king's bigh-way, and as a known road of truth. Now if your censuring the church for teaching herself to be this fure rule and plain high-way of truth, were just, St. Epiphanius did himself err most miserably, in imputing the denial of this to them all as an error, of which every one of those Heretics stood guilty. It is therefore most falle which a certain university man (of whom I shall speak more in the next chapter) over-rashly affirms, that neither St. Epiphanius, nor St. Austin in their catalogues of Heretics, branded any one as guilty for gainfaying this infallible guidance of the church. For you fee St. Epiphonius brands all herefies with this foul mark, faying, that every of thefe berefies leaving this kings high-way of the church (the fure rule, and plain road of truth) declines either on the right-hand, or on the left. And the fame Father ending his books of herefies faith, thefe be the young wenches (so he reads that place of the Canticles, cap. 6. v. 8.) which are faid to be without number; and then to the church he applies the next verse, my dove, my undefiled is but one, one is this virgin, this chaste one, this spouse, the boly city of God, the faith, the foundation of truth, the firm rock against which the gates of Hell shall not pregail. And then going

U

fi

. b

t

n

going to give an abridgment of the faith of the catholic church, he exults in the beginning, that he is now to have nothing to do with filthy herefies, but has made his approach to the calm coaffs of trutb. to-wit, the doctrine of the church. And mark how fecure from errors he thinks himfelf here; for now (faith he) being free of all fear and trouble, and tedioufness, and being in an excellent posture by reason of the firm tranquillity and security bere breathing, bow did we rejoice in spirit being received in a ferene Heaven? we have passed many evils in our navigation, through the fore-faid feas (of herefy) but now having in fight the city (of the church) let us make baste to this boly Jerusalem, and virgin of Christ, and spouse, and secure foundation and rock. our reverend mother, most seasonably saying: let us assend unto the mountain of our Lord, and into the bouse of the God of Jacob, and she will teach us our ways (and not errors, for how free she is from them he farther expresseth.) Let us speak to ber these words which ber spouse did; come my spouse from Libanus, because thou art all fair, and there is not any (pot in thee: (this he saith of the visible church on Earth, teaching us on Earth her ways, for prefently he flieth to her thus;) to the end that being placed in thee, we may rest from those troublesome businesses of the foregoing herefies, in thee our boly mother the church, and in thy boly doctrine, and that we may be refreshed in the truth with the holy and only faith of God. And having spoken so full of this perfect security from error in the church. He tells us whence it proceeds; to-wit, from the special asfistance of God, and that she is not like thy concubine queens, but that she is queen, as the true spouse, baving for ber dowry from Christ the receiving the boly Gbost. And then having spent good part of this abridgment in shewing, by the gross errors among Gentiles and Heretics, that their faith was like

like the concubines, which have no fuch dowry from Christ, he returns to declare in divers particular points the faith of this chast virgin the church, in which nevertheless he spends but a leaf and an half, according to my book. This I note, because Dr. Fern, Sect. 30. wonders that in a book of this fubject there should be no more mention of popish doctrins, had they been the doctrins of antiquity. I think this doctor never fo much as read that book, for if he had, he would have found that he speaks of no one point of any christian faith at all until he comes to these three last leaves except it be of the admirable praises of the church and of her infallibility, or most safe, certain, and secure direction; which is the prime point of popish doctrine. But whofoever shall come to answer that place of Dr. Fern, will tell him how many other popish points make up the other leaf and leaf following; all which points are put down by St. Epiphanius as traditions necessary to be delivered here by him.

4. St. Epiphanius was most wrongfully accused by that univerfity-man of filence, concerning this point of infallibility (which he fo much extols, whereas he should have put it for one of the herefies if he had been one of your religion:) fo also is St. Austin no less wronged, who is the fourth father whose silence of this infallibility they object: and first, fay they, he calls no man heretic for denying of it; whereas all heretics mentioned by him in his books of herefie, could not but deny it according to us, or else they had not been heretics. A strange argument you say, because all heretics denyed this; therefore he should have at least noted this in some one of them. I contrariwise say, because every one of these heretics denyed this, therefore it had been ridiculous to express it concerning any one of them, as if he had been fingular in that one which is common to all, and every one /for

(for example,) were it not ridiculous in the catalogue of canonical books, put down in the front of the bible, to fay of some particular books, for example of the book Leviticus, or the book of judges this book is the true word of God. And would not fuch an addition, make them think, that the being the true word of God, was less common to other books, or that there were fome special doubt of these two books. Just so it would be ridiculous to fay fuch heretics held the church fallible, a thing common to all heretics. Therefore you fee St. Epiphanius, when he was speaking of any particular herefie, did not fay what he faid of that particular herefie, but he faid every one of thefe berefies do this; there never being any special doubt concerning any one fingle herefie, whether it did do that or no, which all herefies must needs do; infomuch that to give you a catalogue of heretics, is the felf same thing that it is to give up a list of such men, who teaching a doctrine, differing from the church to be true, must needs teach her doctrine to be false; and consequently that she did err, and is fallible; and therefore a judge not to be submitted unto in those her errors. Neither did St. Austin omit to note this, if you omit not to note well what he fays. First in the beginning, he puts down the epistle of quod vult deus, intreating him to write this book, that be might know what berefies there bave been? What they did bold contrary to the catholick church? and also what on the contrary the catbolick church has declared against them? these two questions St. Austin takes special notice of in his preface to his book, repeating them in the words in which they were proposed by quod vult deus. And then he begins to satisfie his first question by telling him what every herefie has held contrary to the catholic church. Do you not here fee how, on all fides, it is supposed that every herefie held fomething to be true which the church held

held to be false; and that therefore every herefie must needs teach that the church is guilty of errors, and being mistress of errors cannot be infallible in deciding all points truly? A little skill in Equipollentibus (to which those arrive who have passed the bridge) would have made an university man fee a thing fo clear. Especially being thesecond question makes the first yet more clear, by acknowledging that it is the part of the church to declare her meaning against heretics, which is to acknowledge her the judge in these matters; for this question was to know quid contra teneat ecclesia quantum instructioni satis est subdi, that as much as was necestary for instruction might be told bim concerning the contrary judgment of the church. St. Austin comes not to touch in the least word this second demand, until the end of his book, and then he cuts him off thus: It is superfluously demanded (what you expected to be told by me) whatthe catholic church judgeth against all these, seeing that for this end (of having as much instruction as is necessary) it is sufficient to know that the catholic church is of a contrary judgment to all thefe. Therefore every christian catholic ought not to believe these things. Behold here the judgment of the church, fo much esteemed, that we bave as much as is sufficient for our instruction to avoid any opinion, when we do but know that the church judgeth the contrary, and to defire to know more, is superfluous; for this alone is enough to make any christian catholic not to be of a judgment contrary to the judgment of the church. Could any pope in these our days have spoken more papistically? if you were to make a catalogue of gross errors, and errors incurable, you would put this down in capital letters.

5. Let this then be the first authority of St. Austin for the infallibility of the church; that we have enough to disbelieve any opinion, when she bids us disbelieve it; whence it evidently follows, that we

liave

tl

th

d

a

W

15

ar

th

fa

ch

th

10

en

me

th

ly

of

th

have sufficient to believe any thing, because she bids us believe it, her authority being as well affured for the one, as for the other. A fecond very full place I gave you feel. 19, N. 7. thirdly, it is notorious that St. Austin often profeseth (see his words which I shall cite presently) that baptifm given by heretics is to be held of infallible validity; and this, not because it is set down inany scripture (for he confesseth it is clearly set down in no scripture,) but because the church in a plenary council has declared it to be so; as he often urgeth in the beginning of bis fourth book de baptifmo, and there, chap. 4. he holds the validity of the baptism given by heretics to be a point revealed by the Holy Gooft; to-wit, when the apostles delivered this tradition first to the church; as he intimates there, Chap. 6. This revelation, made by the holy ghost of this point, did then grow to oblige all to affent unto it, when it was notified to the church by a plenary council after St. Cyprians days, as the same saint also teaches. Fourtbly, he accounts it also to bave proceeded from the Holy Ghoft, that we are obliged to communicate before we eat any thing; which will of the Holy Ghost is not notified to us by any scripture; but the church is of sufficient authority to notifie this will of the Holy Ghost, and to make it obligatory. His words are, it is manifest that when the disciples received the body and blood of our Lord, they did not receive fasting: must we therefore callumniate the universal church for always receiving fasting? for bence it is that it has pleased the Holy Ghost, that in honour of so great a sacrament, the body of our Lord should enter into the mouth of a christian before external. meats. For this cause this custom is kept through the whole world, Epist: 118. ad Januarium. fifthly St. Austin Lib. 7. de baptismo, C. 53. treating of a question in which nothing was yet defined by the church, fays; it is not safe for us rashly to deli-

e

)

e

S

e

ver our opinion in this matter, which is not deter mined by any council, but let our care be (fays he) to affirm that to be (securæ vocis) a thing to be spoken securely, which in the government of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is confirmed by the confession of the universal church. No danger of error in this speech; For I ask you, were you not (without fear of being lead into error) fecurely to rely upon the testimony of that party whom Christ should bid you believe? you dare not but fay, yes. Read then fixthly St. Austin, and mark how fully he tells you, that what the church tells you, is told by one, upon whose testimony Christ did bid you rely; and mark how he infers from hence, that as not to hear fuch a person, whom Christ, did bid you hear in such a controvesie, were rather to reject Christ, than to reject such a person; so not to hear the church, whom he did bid you hear in all controversies, is not so much to reject her, as to reject Christ. See if he speaks not to this effect as fully as I have done. Thus then he writes, de unitate fidei, C. 19. Let now an beretic fay unto me, bow do you admit of me into your communion? (he speaks of fuch an one as was baptized by heretics) then he replyed; I reaa:ly answer you. I admit of you as that church admits of you, to which church our Saviour gives Testimony. Do you know better, bow you ought to be admitted of, than our Saviour? bere perhaps you will fay, read unto me then (out of scripture) in what manner Christ has commanded those to be admitted of, who defire to pass from Heretics to the church? This clearly and manifestly (set down in scripture) neither I do read nor you. Now then, feeing that in the fcripture we find not that any who passed from the Heretics to the eburch, were admitted of , either as I fay (without being rebaptized) or as you fay (by first rebaptizing of them I am of apinion, that if there fould have been some wife man, to whom our Lord Tefus Christ gives testimony, and this (wife) man were consulted by us,

T

ti

u

f:

(0

af

tre

we ought by no means to doubt of doing that, which be (bould fay, left that we (bould be judged not fo much to be refractory to this (wife) man as to be refractory to Christ our Lord, by whose testimony be was commended (to be heard.) But Christ does give teftimony to bis Church. If then thou wilt not (be admitted of as the admits of thee) thou dost most perniciously resist not me, or any man, who will thus admit of thee, but thou dost most perniciously resist our Saviour bimself, contrary to thy salvation (that is, damnibly) being that thou wilt not believe that thou oughtest to be admitted of in such a manner, as that church does admit of thee, which church be, by his testimony, does commend, be (I say) wbom you your leives confess that it is a wicked thing not to believe. So he, and no Papill could speak more clearly, to declare the damnable fin of being refractory to the church, even when she has no other scripture for what she bid, than that scripture which bids us bear and obey ber. To which purpose Seventbly, lib 6. 1. contra crescon. cap. 33. speaking of the very self fame point in which the churches infallible authority without other scripture is to be wholly relied upon, to-wit, that baptism given by Heretics is true baptism. Therefore although truly concerning this thing no example can be brought out of the canonical scriptures, yet even in this very thing the truth of the same scriptures is beld by us, when we do that which has pleased the church; which church the autherity of the same scripture does commend, that because the boly scripture cannot deceive, whosoever fears to be deceived by the obscurity of this question. let bim go and confult the church concerning the fame (obscure question) which church the boly scripture without all doubtfulness does demonstrate to us. Behold here St. Austin, in a necessary point of faith (which after the scriptures perused is still obscure) frees us from all fear of erring; if, even in such a point, we rely on the church as infallible. Hence eightbly on P 2 Ptal.

S

0

f

-

ıt

0

24

t,

15

er

5-

cs

ut

ng

en

es

us,

WE

Pfal. 57, he writes thus: it may be that a man may lie, but it cannot be that truth can lie. From the mouth of truth I acknowledged Christ truth itself. From the mouth of truth I acknowledged the church partaker of truth. Behold, that to a man subject to lie, he opposeth first Christ truth itself by esfence; fecondly he opposeth the church truth by participation of bis truth; both of them infallible or not subject to lie, as man is. Ninethly, having delivered the doctrine of the church concerning baptizing children (which point as I shewed, feet. 8. N. 5. he held not to be clearly fet down in scripture) he accounts himself by the churches authority alone so infallibly grounded in this point, that he breaks forth into these words, ferm. 14. de verbis apostol. cap. 18. The authority of our mother the courch bas this. This is made good by the grounded rule of truth. Against this strength, against this insuperable wall whosoever shall be crushed. A place so convincing, that those great defenders of your cause in the famous conference of Ratiston, were forced to answer to it thus; in this point we freely diffent from Austin. In Protocal. Monach. edit. 2. pag. 367. But let them take what the same St. Austin tentbly faith, Ep. ad Januar. 118. cap. 5. If the whole church through the world practife any thing, it is most insolent madness to dispute whether that ought to be practifed or no. So he. Now this by no means could be true without the church were infallible. For a wife man may with modefly difpute against that, which may well be an error. Eleventbly, because the enemies of the infallibility of the church used to fright the defenders thereof with a fond fear of being misled blindly by her prelates, who may (fay they) even in councils err: St. Au-Rin answers, for us thus, Epift. 166. fine. Infomuch as be makes his people secure from ill governors, lest for them the chair of wholefome doctrine should be for saken, in which even the evil are constrained

to deliver true things. For they are not their own things which they say, but Gods, who has placed the doctrine of verity in the chair of unity; whence he says, do what they say, but according to their works

do you not, Mat. 23. So he.

6. Twelfthly, This Prince of doctors, has a place which I will ponder apart, not only because he says clearly as much as we could wish, but chiefly, because he proves unanswerably what he says. And therefore this authority is not answered without anfwering the arguments which he presseth like a master disputant, demonstrating clearly, why, at the very writing of this, he refused to be a Manichean, and why every one, both infidels and christians, ought to refuse the same, I will put his golden discourse at large, adding a short paraphrasis, to put my reader in mind of fuch reflections as deferve to be made of so admirable words. This place is lib. contra Ep ft. fundamenti cap. 4. The Epiftle of Manichefus (which the Manicheans would have pass for Gospel) begins thus, Manicheus the apostle of Jefus Christ by the providence of God the father. I ask therefore (saith St. Aug.) who this Manicheus is? you will answer, the apostle of Christ: I do not believe it Perhaps you will read the gostel unto me. endeavouring thence to prove it. And what if you did light upon one who did not believe the gospet? what would you do then, if such an one should fay unto you. I do not believe you. This is his argument to prove, why an infidel has no reason to be a Manichean, because vou Manicheans (you Lutherans and Calvenist's) who deny the authority of the church, by taking away her infallibility, leave no infallible authority upon which any man can fafely rely in admitting the gospel for the undoubted word Wherefore St. Austin tells them, that they destroying this ground, leave him no infallible ground to believe the gospel more than Infidels do believe

believe it. Wherefore he adds, but I would not (because now you have left me no sufficient, that is, no intallible ground for it) but I would not believe the Gofpel unless the authority of the church did move me thereunto. Here is the first place, where he tells you, the church is effeemed by him fo fure a ground, (which it could not be were it a fallible ground) that upon it alone he builds the belief of this article; the scripture is the word of God: I fay, he builds the belief of this upon this ground alone, because he tells us, if it were not for this ground, he would not believe this fundamental point, whence appears the weakness of our adversaries best anfwer; which is, that St. Auflin only tells us here, what occasionally moved him, when he was a Manichean, fiest to believe the Gospel; so that the fense (say they) is this; I, when I was a Maniebean, would not have believed the gospel, had it not been that the churches authority had first occafionally moved me thereunto. But I pray reflect how clear it is by St. Auftin's words, that he gives an absolute universal reason, why, at the very writing of this difcourfe, he received the gospel for God's true word, fo moved thereunto by the authority of the church, that were it not for her authority, he would not believe the gospel to be the word of God. If he should only have told the Manicheans, what he had done at his first conversion occasionally upon a ground; which ground now he himself thought unsufficient, for such an infallible affent, he had given them no kind of fatisfaction; neither could he have urged them still (as he does) that he, in rejecting Maniebeans must needs rely (as upon fure ground) on the fame authority upon which he first relying was most groundedly induced to give credit to the scripture. The truth then is, that St. Auflin told them, that neither Infidels could believe them (they only citing gospel,) nor cathoof

at

id

re

le

of

1,

,

l,

e

.

e

t

S

lics could believe them, because they only cited that gospel against the church, which he himself with all Catholics believed only to be true gospel for the authority of the church. Whence it follows in him; wby fould not I (now at the writingof these) obey them (the prelates of the church) fayr ing unto me, do not obey Manicheus to whom I obeyed, faying believe the Gofpel. Note here, that he tells you he had so good a ground for what he did, that even now this motive, as an invincible motive, prevails with him; for he fill makes it good thus: charle which you please. If you fay, believe the Catholies; they admonish me to give no credit to you. Wherefore believing them I cannot but dishelieve you. But if you fay, do not believe the Catholics; then you do not take a right course to force me, by the gospel, to believe Manicheus; (I pray mark this reason) because I believe the gospel itself, the Catholics preaching it unto me. But if you fay (to me) you have rightly believed the Catholics praising the golpel, but you have not rightly believe them dispraising. Manir cheus; do you think me fo very a foot, that no reafon being rendered for it, I will believe what you lift, and difbelieve what you lift, except you do not only bid me believe what you will, but you also, most manifestly and evidently, make me know it. If you be (as you will fay) going to give me fuch a reason as shall make it manifestly and evidently known to me that the Catholics erred, in the bidding me not believe Manicheus, but that they erred not in the bidding me receive the gospel, what then? Dimitte Evangelium. Bid farewell to the gospel. (Why?) because if you bold yourself to the gospel (upon a ground that cannot deceive you) I (for my part) will hold myfelf to those, through whose teaching I: bave believed the gospel, and at their command I will not believe thee. Behold, St. Austin tells them, that even now, he will not believe them, because even P 4 now

now he believes the gospel at their teaching, by whole command be is not to believe you. I pray what had this answer been to the purpose, if St. Austin had thought the Catholics now to be believed with affent less than infallible? for if he had thought they could have misled him in bidding him believe the gofpel, he might have thought they could also mislead him in bidding him not believe Manicheus. But you will fay, he thought they might bring manifest and evident demonstrations for this last, because he infinuates that if they did fo, he would believe them. even when they said be bad reason to believe the church praifing the gospel, but not to believe it dispraising Manicheus. Whereas from that which we hold infallible, no reason shall remove us. I answer, that he who faith to a man of another religion, I do not mean to pass to your religion, except you can thew me by manifest and evident demonstration that my religion is false; does he, by this saying intimate that he does not give infallible affent to the religion he is now of? for one may fay to an Atheift, I will die for my belief in the fcripture, except you evidently can demonstrate that the scripture is false, and cannot be God's award. In these speeches a man's meaning is, that until you can flew me that you have done this (which I am fure you cannot shew me) you have no reason to find fault with me for not paffing over unto you. I prove this to be so here if I may but suppose (a thing most true) that St. Austin did, with an infallible affent believe the gospel. For I pray observe, if he speaks not of his intending to forfake his belief in the very gospel itfelf, if the Manicheans can shew by scripture that any doctrine contrary to the belief of the church can be true. So impossible did he hold it to shew the church infallible in any one point. For even thus he fays; if perbaps in the gospel thou shalt be able to find any place that is manifest to prove Manicheus

cheus a true apostle, then indeed you shall weaken unto me the authority of the Catholic's bidding me not believe thee (by shewing their authority is fallible.) Be pleased to reflect attentively on what follows; this authority (of the Catholics) being weakened, now I cannot so much as believe the gospel. The word (now) shews that at the very writing of this, he professeth, that if the Catholics authority could, but in any one single point, be shewed fallible, be cannot now believe the gospel, because says he, by those Catholics, I had believed the gospel, whom you have now in one point shewed fallible. Here some of our adversaries catch hold on those words, because by those Catholics I had believed; whereas, fay they, if he had meant their authority had been the cause of this belief, he should not have used the particles. Per, by, or through, but the particle propter for. A weak objection, for how often in scripture does this particle, by, express the true cause upon which, and only which men believed infallibly, as all did first by or through the preaching of Christ. So 70. 17. v. 20. Christ pray's, not only for his apostles, but also for them which should believe in him by or. through their words. And St. Paul 2 Thef. 2. 15. would have us fland fast and bold the traditions which have been taught us by word, or by his epiffle. What was held by those authorities was held by them with infallibility. That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, Heb. 6. 18. Weaker than this is another eavel, that St. Auflin could not : esteem the church infallible, because for a clear. place in scripture he would have denied her infallibility: for according to this fond cavelling reason, . he should have also esteemed the scripture fallible, . because he likewise says, the Catholics authority being weakened, now I cannot so much as believe the gofpel. The truth then is, that he speaks with an P. 5 Heretic .

Heret'c denying the churches infallibility, and difputing against it out of scripture; wherefore he speaks just with him, as we use to speak with you. doing the like; that is, he tells him only what should happen if his impossibilities were shewed to be rea-And first he fays, that unless his open falsities can be demonstrated out of the true word of God, (which is one impossibility) he would not believe them. Secondly, He even after the performance of this impossibility tells him, he has vet another answer, to wit, that he will neither believe him speaking that, which he could shew to be clear gospel, neither would he believe the church any more, because she had taught him to believe that to be God's true word, which notwithstanding did bear clear witness to that which she taught to be a lie: whence he, feeing her in one point fallible, would never rely on her fo as to believe the fcripture upon her authority, as then he did. You shall fee how clearly he fays this; wherefore, (faith he) if in the gospel no manifest place be found concerning the apostleship of Manicheus, I will rather believe the Catholics than thee; but if thou halt read me out of the gospel any place manifestly for Manicheus, I will neither believe them, nor thee. I will not believe them, because they have lied unto me concerning the (this one lie shewing their church to be fallible) neither will I believe thee (even citing clear scripture as thou callest it) because thou citest to me that scripture to which I gave credit by those who have lied unto me. Which words be perfect non-sense, without you fay, the scripture in St. Austin's opinion loseth (in order to us) her infallibility, if the Catholic church can tell one lie: for in that case St. Austin fays, he would forfake both church and fcripture also, if any clear place in scripture should fay, Manicheus was a true apostle. And he says that for that cause, and upon that ground he would forfake

forfake scripture, because it was that scripture, which he only did hold to be fo, by the authority of the Catholic church, which now he had taken in one lie. But for all this, fays he, God forbid I Should not believe the gofpel; for thou canst not bring any thing to make me believe either the church, or that which is commended for God's word by the church, to be contrary to truth. For even believing the gospel I do not find bow I can believe thee, there being in the gospel nothing for thee. And, then he shews, how clearly he finds the acts of the apostles to be against them: which book (fays he) it is necessary for me to believe, if I do believe the gospel. Note first how he speaks of the belief he had now at the very writing of thefe, faying, that he must believe this book, which is a book rejected by the Manicheans. Whence it is manifest that he speaks of himself as now a Catholic, and such a Catholic as received only fuch books for God's true word, as the church recommended to him for fuch : holding also her recommendation so sure, that she could not fail in recommending any one book for God's word, which was not of necessity to be held. fo, meerly upon her recommendation; for thus he proves, that it was then necessary for him to believe this book (of the acts of the apostles, which, the Manicheans held to be no scripture) if he, believes the gospel, because the Catholic authority (of the church) does in like manner commend both feripe . tures unto me, to-wit, as well the Acts, as the four Gospels; for indeed it is proper to those who believe the church fallible, to believe her only when they think fitting: whereas those who with St. Aus stin believe her infallible, must needs speak as he does, that being the church propofeth this to be believed, as well as that, it is necessary for me tobelieve this on her authority as well as that.

At the transfer of the half reserve

Sect. 22.

STEEL GERMAN IN

ri

bi

ir

0

CI

R

tı

n

K

0

n

t

That all which the Fathers fay of the infallibility of the church in her traditions or councils, or in general terms, is meant by them particularly of the Roman church, as we understand the Roman church.

1. I Must now take away from our adversaries their I last shift, which is, that although St Austin and fo many other Fathers speak so often of the infallibility of the traditions of the church, and of the councils of the church, and of the churches authority in general; yet, fay they, what is this to the Roman church, more than to the English, which is a part of the Catholic as well as the Roman; the only being a part and not the whole Catholic church? I answer, that when we fay the church is infallible, we speak, as antiquity ufeth to speak of the church; that is, we speak of it, as of a flock adhearing to their true head-paftor; and confequently we speak of the church of Rome in this fense, as she is a church Catholic. that is, univerfally comprehending all the sheep of Chrift, living in any nation though never fo far from Rome, yet joined in communion to the bishop of Rome, as to her head-pastor: for this the Roman church, as comprehending all churches united to her communion, cannot be shewed in any time since Christ, to have differed in doctrine from what the universal church ever taught, or practised: if therefore the universal church, following tradition, be by the galance of the same tradition infallibiy conducted, according to the opinion of the Fathers; the Roman church, ever treading the very felf-fame steps, must needs have proceeded as infallibly. gain, if the church representative be infallibly guided by the Holy Ghoft, as I have proved, the felfsame must needs be true of the Roman church, whoever was joined in communion and unity of dcctrine with every lawful general council which has been been from Christ's time to this. For it is so notorious, that our adverfaries cannot deny it, that the bishop of Rome, either by himself, or by his legates in his name, has prefided in every fuch council, and subscribed unto it in the very first and chief place, or at least he did send his confirmation and ratification of all the acts thereof. Her doctrine has then always agreed with all lawful councils: if their decrees be infallible rules, as I have proved, then the Roman churches doctrine, ever ruled by them, is infallible. And the same fathers who say the doctrine agreeing with councils is infallible, also by manifest consequence say, that the doctrine of the Roman church is infallible. This being fo notorious, no wonder if the Fathers many times promiscuously speak in the same manner of the Roman church, and of the church in general, and take the one for the other, making no distinction at all. And this they do both for the reasons before faid, as also because by the very name of the church they understood they flock of Christ grounded by St. Peter, and his successors as their lawful pastor appointed by Christ. And just as the apostle tells us, that Christ did purchase a church unto bimself by his blood: fo St. Chrysoftom, lib. 2. de facerd. asking, why Christ did shed his blood? anfwers, that be might purchase unto bimself bis seep, the charge of aubich be committed both to Peter and bis fuccessors. Hence you see that with him the church univerfally is one and the felf-fame thing, that the flock of Christ's sheep, governed by St. Peter's fuccessor the bishop of Rome; so St. Cyprian tells us Epift. 69. That the church is a people united to their priest, and a flock adhearing to their Shepberd, Hence venerable Bede. lib. 2. Hift. Ecch. cap. 2. fays, Pope Greg. governed the church in the days of Mauritius the emperor. And St. Gregory. lib. 4. Diel. c. 40. fays, the church refused Lau-

rence to be ber governor when Symmachus was chofen Pope. He used the style of St. Irenaus, lib. 3 cap. 3. who fays, that to Linus (the fucceffor of St. Peter) the apostles gave the charge of governing the Church; taking the Roman bishops charge promiscuously for the charge of the universal church. And St. Jerome, Epist. 58. ad Damasum. If any one be joined to the chair of St. Peter, Meus est, be is of my Religion. And again, Ep. 57. to the fame pope he speaks thus: to thy boliness, that is, to the chair of St. Peter, I am joined in communion; upon shis rock (fo he calls St. Peter's chair) I know the church is built. He is profane who sever be is, who eats the lamb out of this boufe. He who is not in the Ark of Noah shall perish in the Deluge. And St. Leo, Ep. 84. ad Anast. c. 11. sheweth distinctly. how in the church there is fuch subordination of the people to their bishop, and of these to their higher bishops, and of all higher bishops to the bishop of Rome; that by them the charge of the universal church might be referred to that one chair of Peter, so nothing any where should disagree from their bead. St. Ferome again, 1, ad Tim. 3. fays, that Pope Damalus was rector of that bouse of God, which St. Paul called the pillar and foundation of truth. And St. Ambrose, in Oratione funeb. de obitu fratris fui Satyri, praiseth his brother Satyrus for his care in choosing a Catholic bishop by this rule, that be enquired whether they agreed with the Catholic bi-Shops, that is, with the Roman church: fo he, taking the Catholic and Roman for all one. Hence St. Cyprian calls the bishop of Rome, the bishop of the Catholic church. We know Cornelius to bave been elected by Almighty God and Christ our Lord, the bishop of the most baly Catholic church; neither are we ignorant that there ought to be one God, one Christ our Lord, one Holy Gooft, one bishop in the Catholic church. So he lib. 3. Ep. 11. And again,

6.

or

3g

0h.

y

)e

e

e.

2.

je.

10

10.

ţ.

.

ç

T

V

d

5

e

f

Does be confide bimfelf to be in de unitate Ecclesia. the church, who for fakes the chair of Peter, upon which the church is founded? whence it is evident, that by the church he meant the multitude of believers adhering to the chair of the bishop of Rome. So also the most ancient Pope Anacletus, not fourscore years after our Saviours death, speaks thus, in the end of his first Epistle registered among the decretals and councils, the apostles by the command of our Saviour bave appointed that the greater and barder questions should always be referred to the apostolical seat, upon which Christ has built the universal church, be bimself faying, thou art Peter (that is, a Rock) and upon this nock I will build my church: So be. Hence I have the very ground why the fathers promiscuously by the name of the church, universally understood the Roman church, upon whose seat the universal was built. And this ground is made good by a world of Fathers in Coccius, where he treats of the primacy of the bishop of Rome.

2. That which is for my present intent, is to shew, that the Fathers, and why the Fathers, dotake the name of the church promiscuously for the Roman church, though they do not name her by that name, because it was so notorious that by the name of the church they meant no other thing than Christ's flock under their true Shepherd the bishop. of Rome: and when it is once notoriously known to the hearers what is meant by fuch a word, the use of it is sufficiently determinate. So here in England, when with one another we fay the parliament did decree or examine such a thing, we are known notoriously to speak of the English parliament; though the word parliament be as indifferent to fignifie the French parliament, especially if spoken by French to French in the middle of France, as I have turther declared, feel. 7. towards the end. I note alfo.

2

19/

11

h

Ы

H

W

go

p

m

af

21

n

C

R

la

cl

bi

110

W

th

ar

h

Si

th

h

W

fp

C

0

at

co

hi

1?

W

re

also, that all that I here in the last sections cited out of the fathers for the infallibility of the church in her traditions and councils, must needs be spoken of no other church than of such an one as did not disclaim from infallibility; but all churches but the Roman, disclaimed from infallibility; therefore they taught no other church but the Roman to be infallible. If you ask why they must needs teach no church to be infallible which disclaimed from being so, I have given you a most evident reas on

thereof, feet. 17.

3. This note shews, that the fathers must needs have in those sayings of theirs concerning infallibility, understood the Roman church, and could understand no other differing from her. But indeed (as I have faid) their very vulgar phrase of catholic church, was known then to be applied to the Raman, taken in the sense we spoke of. Hence that old Arian Jocundus faid to king Theodoric; if you put Armogastes (a catholic) to death, the Romans (that is, the chatholics) will proclaim bim a martyr, as witnesseth Victor Uti. de perfec. Vand. lib. 1. Hence also Ricemer another Arian, did write unto the Gennenses. If be be a catholic, be is a Roman. And St. Greg. of Tours, lib. 1. de gloria Martyr. cap. 25. telling how Theodegefilus an Arian king of Partugal faid, fuch a miracle was a trick of the Romans; he adds this parenthesis, for they call the Men of our religion Romans. So he. This then was the vulgar old Stile. Thus spoke antiquity, If be be one of Christs sheep be is one of St. Peter's successors Flock, as I shew'd out of St. Chrysostom: If he be of the catholic church, be is one of the people united to this chief priest, as I show'd out of St. Cyprian. If mention be made of one to whom the charge of governing the church is given, the bishop of Rome is understood in the vulgar language of the primitive church, as I thew'd out of Bede, St. Gregor, St. Irenaus. If a St. ed

ch

en

ot

e

e

e

n

n

ls i-

d

d

C

e

9

a

e

a

2

a St. Hierom would tell you, who were of his church or communion, he understands every one join'd to the chair of St. Peter; for upon this Rock be knows the church is built. If a St. Leo speaks of one who has the charge of the univerfal church, he means the bishop who fits in the chair of St. Peter. If a St. Hierom will fignifie a Damasus bishop of Rome, he will do it by calling him, the rector of the bouse of god, which is the church, the pillar and foundation of Truth. If a St. Ambrose or his brother, be to pick out among schismatics, a bishop who is a true member of the catholic church, he will do it by asking, Whether be agrees with the catholic bishop; and he will tell you, that in plain terms, by that name he means the Roman church. And if a St. Cyprian be to speak of a Cornelius bish p of the Roman church, he will explicate himself in current language, by calling him, bishop of the catholic church, he being notoriously known to be that one bishop which must be at all times in the church, and no man can confinde that he is in the chatbolic church, who for sakes the chair of St. Peter. You need not then wonder to here me fay, that by those who are in the catholic church, we mean those who have not forfaken, but cleave fast to the chair of St. Peter, for on this apostolical feat Christ bas built the universal church, as the most antient Anacletus has told you. Hence a St. Austin (Epist. 162.) will tell Cecilian, that he needs not fear the conspiring multitude of African bishops as long as he communicated with Melchiades the pope. Hence Optatus 1. 2. contra Parmenian. will trust the Donatists out of the number of catholics, because they comunicated not with the Roman church; and he himself will adhere to Sericius the pope, to wbom all the World was united. All the World then were papilts; and those counted Heretics who refus'd to be so. And in this sense not to be a papilt.

pist, that is, not to be one united in communion to the pope, was the felf fame as not to be catholic; for all the catholic World was united to the pope or

11

u

P

head-pastor of Christs flock.

4. Besides all this, you must know, that the fathers did not always forget to express themselves concernthe falibility of the church of Rome by name, or as fignificately as if they had put that name. In my Sea. 19. N. 7. I cited St. Austins words at large, to prove, that God has left some such authority unto us; that by it, as by a well affured step we may be lifted up to God: and hence he concludes, that no man should doubt to betaken himself to the lap of the Roman church, for this church you will find his words evidently to describe. read them and you cannot deny it. again, pfal. in partem donati he speaks thus of St. Peters chair. She is that rock which the proud gates of bell cannot vanquish. And St. Cyprian, Ep. 55. N. 6. They are so bold as to carry letters from prophane schismatics to the chair of Peter, and the principal church whence prieftly unity rofe, not confidering the Romans to be them, whose faith (the aposse being the commender thereof) was prais'd, to whom mistelief cannot bave access. And St. Hierom apologia adver. Ruff. L. 3. cap. 4. know you, that the Roman faith commended by the apostles mouth, will receive no fucb decits, nor can possibly be chang'd tho' an angel taught otherwise. Our adversaries commonly receive the fixth general fynod celebrated A. 680. in which, after the epistle of Agatho the Pope had been read, (Act. 4.) it was confirm'd by these words (Act. 8) This is the true rule of faith, which the apostolical church of Christ bas vigorously beld, and still defends; which church shall never be prov'd to have err'd from the path of apostolical tradition: (and that you may know this was to hold true for ever, the council adds) according to the divine promise of our Lord and Saviour, I have pray'd for thee, that thy faith may not

the

for

Or

ers

rn-

45

· A.

ve,

bat

to

Ild

an

e-

ny

of

ud

p.

m n-

ng ng

e-

d-

110

rel

ve h,

d,

al

m

il

14

ry of

not fail. Here you have the very phrase we now use of impossibility of erring grounded in the divine promise. What is this call'd but infalibility? the same divine promise is just so applied to St. Peter's Successors by St. Leo, ferm. 3. in anniversum: if we will speak with antiquity, here is Aperta promissio, a manifest promise that the pastor of the church, St. Peter's successor proceeding as universal pastor, or defining in a council, neither shall nor can fail, for which promise Dr. Fern SeA. 27. calls so earnestly.

5 By this time my reader will see how exceeding little reason our adversaries have to take for a strong argument against infallibility the deep silence of antiquity (as they speak) in this point; whereas I in a svery short time, with my small reading, have been able so to weary out my reader with the plentiful authorities of antiquity, that he will easily remember hereafter what just indignation ought to be conceived against this gross falsity.

Sect. 23.

Some things very necessary for the easier answering our adversaries objections.

Before I begin any one of our adversaries objections I must (to take away all prejudice) intreat my reader in the whole reading of this next section to note, First, how infallibly all the christian world, except some sew Socinians, affirm themselves to believe all things contain'd in those books which they hold canonical scripture; and yet I will undertake that any judicious man in the world, who with a calm, sober, and disinterressed mind shall attentively ponder on the one side what they object against the infalibility of the church; and then on the other side, all those exceeding many places of scripture which seem so manifestly contrary to one ano-

ther, that the greatest wits that ever yet were, could never clear them fo, but still the difficulty which remains is fo very great, that no full satisfaction would ever be receiv'd, if mens wills were bent as resolutely to receive no answer but a manifest one against the infallibility of scripture as the wills of protestants are bent to reject all we can say in anfwer to their objections against infallibility of the church, unless our answers be more manifestly evident than the noon fun-shine: wherefore in this matter due respect to divine authority makes us always fo far fubmit our understandings, by force of our will, that, if the contrary be not (as I may fay) more than evident, we are refolv'd to yield no affent unto it. Any man who should ponder this on the one fide, and then with due attention confider on the other fide, how very few the objections against the infallibility of the church are, in comparison of the objections against the infallibility of scripture, and with how much sweat and labour these are scarce solv'd at last; whereas the others are answered, so that nothing like evidence can be brought against them, especially, if men would come to look upon these objections, as upon so many weak difficulties of human reason against an authority, which fo strongly can prove her participation of divine verity, having for the evidence thereof twelve ftrong texts of scripture related Sect. 14. 15. So many invincible reasons related Sect. 16. So many unanswerable testimonies of Holy Fathers as have been related these four last sections. He (I say) who would thus on both sides consider the matter, would find it even impossible for him in his conscience to deny, that the objections against the infallibility of the church are anywife either so many in number, or so insuperable to human capacity, as the objections be which may be made aginst the infallibility of scripture.

2. And because this observation and note is of

great

gre

tha

infa

rea

poo

(cri

tior I fi

full

cer

yet

wit Aro

aga

the

gen

into

gene

tak

bity

tair

you

be t

in t

of t

And

ou

0 2

he

cou

tha

on

him

uld

ich

ion

as

ne

of

in-

he

vi-

his

21-

of

ay)

ent

he

on

nst

of

re,

are

er-

2-

ok

fi-

ch

ne

ng

n-

1-

a-

10

bi

y,

10

fo

e

e. of at

great moment to make the protestant reader fee. that it is more his own prejudice against the churches infallibility, which stands in his light, than any folid reason; I will alledge an objection or two, which poor, weak human reason moves against the divine infallibility of all that is contain'd in undoubted scripture. We need not go far to find these objecions. Even in the first chapter of the first gospel I find a difficulty fo great, that tho' I have (as I fully think) most carefully sought satisfaction concerning it, in thirty or more of the best interpreters. vet I could find no answer half so satisfactory, as I, with my poor ability, hope to give to the very frongest objection that I could ever yet see made against the infallibility of the church, taking the church in the sense which I explicated Sed. 18. the objection is this, which you may touch with your Fingers. It is faid, Matt. 1. v. 17. All the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen This is the infallible text. Now generations. take your Fingers, and count with as great infallibity, as you can count fourteen names fet down in hir print before your eyes. In the first fourteen you will find Abraham to be the first, and David to be the last. These you must not count over again in the second sourteen. So that Solomon is the first of the second fourteen, and Jechonias is the last: And as David was not to be counted in the second ourteen, because he was already counted in the first; o also Techonias must not be counted once more in he third fourteen, because he has been once before counted in the second fourteen; whence it follows, hat the first in the third fourteen is Salatbiel the on of Fechonias, and the last must needs be Christ simfelf; so that you must find twelve more genera-

tions between Salatbiel the first and Christ the last; or elfe (fays human reason) infallibly you have not fourteen generations as St. Matthew faith you have. It is a small labour for you to see whether you have twelve more, or no; lay every feveral finger upon every feveral name, and if you have ten Fingers two names must remain untouch'd, or else you will not have twelve. I touch'd my thumb upon the name of Salatbiel, whom I have prov'd to be the first of the last fourteen, then I touch'd the name of Zorobabel with my fore-finger, and thus having touch'd all my ten Fingers at the ten following names, I could not possibly see any more names to touch but the name of Joseph. When reason told me, that feem'd to the very eye to be a demonstration that Salatbiel, who was the first of this last fourteen, having but eleven more following him to Chrift, could not (with Christ) make up the last fourteen. How then, if this be infallibly true, comes that also to be infallibly true which St. Matthew fays contrary to this, calling thefe last thirteen generations as clearly fourteen as he call'd the former?

3. Again St Luke setting down the genealogy of Christ, fays, cap 3. v. 35, 36. Salah which was the fon of Cainan, which (Cainan) was the fon of Arphaxad. And all the greek copies of the new testament read thus, conformable to all the greek copies of the old testament, Gen. 11. v. 12. Yet if you turn to this place in Genefis translated faithfully by our vulgar, and your own bible, you shall not find that Cainan was the fon of Arphaxad, as St. Luke fays, but you shall find these words; and Arphaxad lived five and thirty years and begat Salah, whereas this Salab was the fon of Cainan according to St. Luke and not the fon of Arphaxad. If you fay this Salah was Arphaxad's fon, because Arphaxad was his grand-father; I pray note, that Arpbaxad is faid to have begot him when he was five and thirty years old, whereas if you mark

even

th

ol

w

CC

ar

ta

W

be

16

15

th

Coly

h

u

ft

to

71

tı

to

4

11

f

f

ti

ti

1

ot

e.

re

n

0

ot

e

of

of

g

g

0

d

1-

-

7,

n.

0

y

15

of

e

-

it

e

15

г,

n

u

d

IS

e 's

y ·

n

k

even that chapter of Genesis you shall see no one there mention'd who had a fon before thirty years old; for as in those days they liv'd very long, so it was long before they us'd then to marry. Again there is yet a far greater difficulty that the greek copy of the old testament, which St. Luke follow'd, reads thus, and Arphaxad lived five and thirty years and begat Cainan, fo that, if Arphaxad were grandfather to Salab because he begat his father Cainan. when he himself was five and thirty years old (in which year of his age your bible and ours fay he begat Salab) thus Salab his grandchild and Cainan his father must be born the same year, which, says reason, is infallibly false. Now if you say Cainan is to be omitted according to some greek copies in the old testament, yet what will you say to all the copies of the new testament which most unanimously put him down? here venerable Bede professeth himself to admire that which his dulness cannot And indeed, I think no Man underunderstand. stands it. And reason is more gravelled and quite nonplus'd at another contradiction, which feems to her unavoidable. Turn in your bible to Kings 2. cap. 8. v. 26. There you read, two and twenty years old was Ahasia when be began to reign, and be reigned one year in Jerusalem, and bis mothers name was Athaliath. Now turn to 2 Chron. cap. 22. v. 2. and fee if a very different story be not also true scripture. For thus you shall read, Forty and two years old was Ahasia when to began to reign, and be reigned one year in Jerusalem, bis mothers name was Athaliath. Against the infallibility then of scripture, reason conceives her self to have this infallible in demonstration: no one is infallible in speech who speaks two things quite contrary one to another; but these two speeches are quite contrary, when of the same man one affirms, be began to reign when be was two and twenty year old,

and another affirms, that be was forty two years old; therefore the scripture is not infallible in speech.

4. Here by the way reflect (dear reader) how. demonstratively false it is which our adversaries say. that by the only knowledge of scripture a man may clearly be instructed in all fundamental or necessary points: now I ask, whether any point be with you more fundamental or more necessary than this: the scripture is infallible? but this point is so far from being clearly deduc'd out of the reading of the scripture, that he, who shall read these three places, shall see with his Eyes, that these places alone make this verity more obscure than any place of scripture makes the contrary evident; for reason left her felf, will sooner shift off any place you can cite for the evidence of the scriptures infallibility, than you shall be able to shift of the places cited. I do not put the answer to those three places, that the reader may, by his own experience, fee how true it is, that all that concerns necessary points is not clear in scripture; for what point more necessary, than that the scripture is infallible, and what point has fuch unanswerable difficulty as these be? if you could but bring half so clear a demonstration against the infallibility of the church, how would you triumph? all that could be faid by us would never farisfie you. And yet here you must be satisfied, or grant scripture in it self not to be infallible. What fondness then, for incomparable weaker objections, to stand out so pernicioully against the infalibity of the church. Note this, and you will foon note your own preposterous dealing.

5. Secondly, I must set down here a note, which, according to good method, some might have expected in the beginning of this question of infallibility; but had it been put down there, it might have been subject to have been forgotten before we should

have

f

t

to

d

u

p

at

it

e

th

fa

th

W

tr

th

ed

A

m

fer

7

7

L

M

f

e

9

1

n

,

t

7

S

151

ł

S

3

d

1

t

4

.

e

5

,

•

e

d

e

have come to make chief use of it, which is to be done in this next fection. This fecond note then, is this, that my reader must be made capable of what kind of infallibility we speak, when we say, the church in her traditions, and definitions, is infallible; for that these traditions and definitions deliver infallible verities unto us. This point is learnly declared by our learned country-man, Bacon in analysi sidei, disp 3 cap. 7. citing divers solid divines for this doctrine. We say then, that our act of faith, by which we believe the church, propofing any thing to us by her traditions or definitions. is infallible in this fense; that this act of faith is begot by fuch causes as do secure it from all kind of error; fo that the understanding, which is informed, or made knowing by this act, ought to adhere fo strongly to what such an act affirms to be true. that though an angel from Heaven should fay the contrary, this understanding would never be brought to affent to him. So firm adhension flows from an act secured so well from error by the causes which did produce it, I say with great reflection that this understanding by this act is so affected, that the party would not be brought by the preaching of an angel to believe the contrary, and I did not fay, that it could not be brought. For though the nature of evident knowledge shewing that a thing is so, makes that the party cannot affent to the contrary; yet this infallible act of faith, only makes a man to affected that be will not cease from adbearing so strongly to what he believes, as long as this act remains unretracted. This firmness of adhesion springs from the great value and esteem which we put (deservedly) upon the causes moving him to this affent. And this is the true reason why you will by no means be brought to doubt of the infallibility of the scripture by any strong objection that your natural. reason makes, when the suggests such objections as

I just now framed meer pertinaciousness also, and a false fancy of the value of the causes by which even Heretics pretend to be moved to their errors. makes many rather lose their lives, than forfake to Rick close to what they imagine to be God's word: shall not then a prudent esteem, solidly grounded concerning the divine authority moving to the belief of these and these points, be able to make a man adhere so closely to them as I said? when then my understanding has motives, though not wholly infallible yet fuch as cause a most prudent affent that God bas faid fuch a thing; and this is made fo evidently credible unto me, that in prudence I cannot think it to be otherwise; and Heaven is also by most highly valuable promises, offered me, if I will asfent to this with that respect which is due to God's word; and Hell on the contrary is threatened unto me by most truly formidable menaces, if I will not affent to this verity as to a verity affirmed by God; am I not rather stark mad, than imprudent only if I will not bend my understanding by force of my will to adhere with all its power, to this verity, as to a verity affirmed by God, and esteem it as such a verity ought to be esteemed. Wherefore, as it is a blasphemous impiety to suspect, that the very least danger of falsity can be in a thing affirmed by God: fo because the reasons I alledged make me carry myfelf fo towards that (which is thus propofed to me to believe) as towards a verity revealed by God, the felf-fame reasons do make me consequently more willing to deny any natural evidence, that I can have, than to give way to the entertainment of any fuspicion of fallibility in this which I have received as God's own word, as indeed it is. feet. 16. num. 6.

6. Now that which I mainly insist upon, is this, such an infallibility of adhesion as this act is, cannot be liable, or any way subject to uncertainty,

10

I

V

W

th

ei

fe

tie

or

fu

m

ciı

th

the

gir

me

to

vea

fup

nev

nov

lief

rac

uni

dow

ceiv

thu

that

deli

of n

no more than the infallibility of that man whom God had fully resolved so to guide, and direct, in all that he should say or write, that he would ne-of ver permit him to fay or write the least falfity, although this man never knew nor suspected himself to have this priviledge. Just so, though we neither feel, nor by evidence know the infallibility of our affent, our act of affent will be infallible, if Godni really concur unto it by fuch principles as are no way liable to error. All the difficulty then in proving this our affent to be infallible, confifts in this whether or no we can prove that God concurs to this affent by fuch principles as are no way liable to error? to prove this, we must prove, that our asfent has for its object not only an apparent Revelation, but also a Revelation certainly true; and not only true casually (by our hitting by chance upon fuch an object as is truly revealed by God) but it must be of fuch a nature that it cannot, in these circumstances guide me to assent to any thing but that which cannot but be truly revealed. This then I prove thus, although there might be imagined fuch circumstances in which God could let me have all the motives which so powerfully moveto believe, that such and such a point is to be revealed by God; although this were not fo; yet supposing that the divine providence has resolved never to permit (in the circumstances in which men now live) any falfity to be commended to our helief by so powerful motives as these be, to-wit, miracles, full report of millions, and millions teaching uniformly the same points to have been delivered down to them, by millions atteffing, that they received them as delivered from the apostles, and thus going up until we come to them who testify. that with their own ears they heard all these points delivered by them, and did fee them work worlds of miracles in confirmation of them, that they did hear

S

t

y

-

y

t-

at

nt

re

ee

is,

n-

y,

10

hear those simple men refute all philosophers, speak all languages, tell the very fecrets of the heart, foretel things to come without ever missing. &c. Supposing, I say, that the Divine Providence is resolved never to let any falfity cloak herself with these powerful motives, these motives are the certain liveries of truth, and that which comes vested in them, cannot be any thing but truth. And this holds good whether I be or be not affured, that the Divine Providence is resolved never to permit any falfity to be thus recommended to us. For it is not our knowing that no falfity will ever be permitted by God to be thus recommended to us, which is the cause why no falsity can be thus recommended: but it is meerly the extrinfical will of God, determining to provide fo for our fure guidance to that end, for which he created us, that hence he comes to resolve not to permit at any time, any falsity to be fo powerfully recommended unto as as it should be by these motives of credibility which he sets apart for his peculiar use of delivering the verities of our faith unto us, as we fet the use of our feals apart for ratifying only fuch things as we intend to acknowledge for our own true deeds.

7. If you ask of me, how I can prove that God has resolved never to permit any fassity to be recommended by those motives, by which the verities of our faith are recommended? I answer, that first, the motives which recommended the verities of our faith, do convince that which is so recommended, to be morally certain; as the full report of all men from all parts of England make it morally certain that there is such a city as London, to those who never came near London by an hundred miles. How much then would it misbeseem the divine verity and goodness to concur to the making of a falsity so credible as it is credible to all men that there is such a city as London? But secondly, it would

tl

fc

ri

h

would far more misbeseem him to make no less affured offers of Heaven to those who would believe a lie thus recommended, and threaten Hell unto them without they would embrace fuch a lie, even for a verity revealed by God, which threats were as certainly to be feared, as London is certainly to be believed to be in England by those who have not feen London. Thirdly, it is evident that God can impose an obligation upon man to follow the true religion as a means negestary to obtain his salvation, which religion may propose some verities to be believed as divine, and as things revealed by God: now supposing our nature and present condition, (I may boldly fay) either that belief which is recommended by fuch motives as ours are, must be this true religion, or you cannot affign unto me any other kind of belief, recommended by any other kind of motives, which can make it feem fo credible to me as our religion. It is impossible, that a meer lie should be so much more credible than God's true word, as our religion is absolutely more credible than any false belief; for this would breed a notable disparagement and disesteem of the divine authority, making it of less credit than a lie. How can that God, who has a ferious will to oblige us to embrace that belief as divine. which is the only true way appointed by him to lead us to Heaven, have a will also directly deffructive of this will? that is, how can he have a will to permit the lies, opposite to what he would have us believe, to be in all reason made more credible by the motives which recommend them. than those verities are, which according to reafon he would have us embrace, not only for verities, but for verities affirmed by him, that is, for infallible verities? fo that you fee at last, we have brought it to a plain contradiction to fay, that (supposing our nature and the present circumstances appointed:

appointed de facto, by the divine providence) our religion recommended by the aforefaid motives should be false in this present state, whatsoever it might have been in some other state, which God could have chosen, if he would have had no providence concerning us; to which providence I

confess nothing could oblige him.

8. Supposing then no more than what is evident both by scripture and reason, that God is resolved to have a providence over us, and to bring us to the end for which he made us, by the belief of feveral verities which he has revealed; it is impossible that as long as he has this will he should not also have a will to recommend to our belief these verities (which he would have us believe) by fuch motives, as no lie can come recommended by him as long as he still intends to use this providence towards us. The acts then of our faith are infallible, because really (whether the party who believes, knows it or no) these acts proceed from such causes as are uncapable (in these present circumstances) of recommending any thing that is false: But they still recommend that which is atteffed not by any appacent, but by a most true revelation made by Christs apostles to the church; which church also is, by the like motives recommended, as infallible, and we evidently, by our very fenfes, know what this church certainly teacheth; whereas, though all which the scripture fays be infallible, yet we have not only no infallibility, but even no very probable certainty of our understanding the scripture in the true fense in many necessary points, except it be by the instruction of the church, as has fully been shewed fette 7.10 toe contiden als avent is

9 Now besides these exterior principles of our assent, by which I say we believe with an infallible belief the articles of our faith, we must here note that the assent itself is never produced seven by those who

es it

d

0 T

d

1

who have the habit of true faith) unless it be by the supernatural illumination of God, elevating us to all that has immediate relation to the supernatural state of Heavenly glory; whence St. Paul teacheth us that in order to attain this high state we are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of our-Selves, but our sufficiency is from God, 2 Cor. 3. 5. Every time that a true believer exerciseth an act of true faith, God of his infinite goodness, affords this supernatual light infusing it unto the understanding to elevate it, and inable it, to produce the supernatural act of faith. Yet when a man has, or has not this supernatural affishance in his act, he cannot tell, be he never so learned. This all may know, that God does never give this supernatural help to believe any thing, which is not really delivered by a true revelation made to the apostles; otherwise he might be faid to give supernatural aid to believe alie.

10. Out of all this discourse, that appears to be true, which we most desire to be noted, that our acts of faith may be most truly infallible and are. proved to be so, because they proceed from causes so determing to that only which is true, that they cannot determin our affent to any falfity; and that all this happens thus, although we cannot evident-

ly know when we believe infallibly.

Sect. 24.

Twenty objections of an university man against the infallibility of the church, and also some others are folved.

A FTER I had resolved on this treatise, I did read in the preface of an university man to a work of John Daille, set forth to excuse the reformed churches from schisms, twenty objections arged with so great confidence against the infallibility of the church that at the end of his preface he promiseth to turn Papist if such objections be punctually

0 4

answered:

answered; but withal he would have yet one argument more solved. I shall endeavour to give him a little more large satisfaction than he requires; for I will also return him answer to all that concerns this point, either in this or any other

part of his preface.

2. First then P. 22. He would overthrow all we have faid of the churches being our judge in controversies, because so little is said against Hereticks, for denying this, by St. Epiphanius and St. Austin, to which I have abundantly answered, And also he would have us condemned by the silence of Tertullian, which I have answered, feet. 20. N. 9. fine; and by the like filence of Vincent Lirinensis, which I have answered, sed. 7. What you add of Optatus and St. Austin, who found against their adversaries no judge upon Earth (as you fay) but scripture; you must note that they spoke as they did, not because the faithful people were not provided of another infallible judge, but because those contentious fellows against whom they spoke did (as Optatus intimates) make no account of the churches contrary judgment, as the Tews make no account of our new Testament: wherefore, as when doctors or fathers dispute against Jews. they do not fland pressing them with the authority of the new Testament, though they themselves hold it of infallible authority (because they know the lews fcoff at fuch authorities) fo St. Auslin here, and formerly cited by you, as also Optatus, did not fland pressing their adversaries with the authority of the church, which they themselves held infallible, because they knew those Heretics would as much fcoff at them as the Jews would fcoff at those who should press the authority of the new Testament, and as you use to scoff at us if we only cite the council of Trent against you. Wherefore you fee that I, who fo clearly hold the church OUL

our infallible judge, do not take any text of the council of Trent for my argument to prove this,

though I hold that council infallible.

3. Again you object St. Paul's making no mention of this judge in his Epistle to the Romans; in which I am fure he does not also tell them that the scripture only must be taken for judge; nor does he warn them to take great heed of the bishops of that city, who in time would usurp a judicative austhority which should be the bane of Christendom, as Dr. Fern speaks, and make all their errors incurable, as you both speak, which news would have been worth all the rest of bis Epistle, in the judgment of those who pass their judgment with that prophane liberty that you do here. The truth is, that this judgment-feat concerned no more the Romans, than all the world. St. Paul twice taught the infallibility of the church to all the world in the texts I cited, feel. 15, N. 14. N. 18. That then. which no more concerned the Romans than all the world, was not in reason to be intimated to them in particular. What you add next of the deep filence of the Fathers and Historians about this point, must needs turn to confound your ignorance when you shall have read all I faid, feet. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22: Your enfuing discourse (for as much as concerns our doctrine of infallibly) has had its full anfwer in my last section, by which you will see that when any thing is believed, which is not truly revealed the act of faith can never be infallible, and fo no act of faith concerning Protestantism can be infallible. Neither are we infallible because the acts of our faith are infallible, no more than all? those who believed Christ himself or his apostles were infallible. They are indeed infallibly guided, but if they leave off being thus guided, and will become guides, they will foon betray their own fallibility. What next concerns infallibility, be

your twenty objections put by way of questions, as some of them indeed are. I was the location

4. Objection 1. You ask whether there be any infallible judge upon Earth? I have given you a

full answer, Quest. 1.

Leirl of sabre 5. Ob. 2. Whether the church be that judge? and why not rather some of those ten things named by chilling. I have Quest. 3. initio, given reasons sufficient for any reasonable man, who must not think that in this our last age, he is born soon enough by a thousand and fix hundred years, to teach the church that which no one parish of the church can ever be proved to have held. The very citing scripture for ten several judges (as you fay chilling. does) shew clearly how infinitely short of folid proof all other judges commissions fall, in comparison of what we have alledged for the ehurches authority in this point, through the whole third question.

6. Ob. 3. Whether the Roman church be this judge? Yes. See all my proofs from feel. 17, to

my last fection.

7. Ob. 4. Whether the infallibility of this church, be in the head (the Pope) or in the body; and whether in the body diffusive or collective? all this I have answered, seet. 18. N. 1. 2, 3. For as much as concerns the practical duty of any Catholic school speculations (or divines private opinions) have nothing to do with necessary faith.

8. Ob. 5. Here your questions turn to objections, which contain in general, the difficulties concerning those persons who ought to have their free votes in a council. Concerning this point, I have faid something sect. 18. N. 3. By which the Laics and inferior clergy are fufficiently excluded, though these clergy mens votes as consultive, or for advice fake, be most laudably demanded, when they be eminent divines: and for the comfort of the weaker,

their

their subscriptions may be of very good use and fervice to overwhelm heretics, by fuch authority as they use to fear most, who slight any mention of more than human authority in councils. And because amongst all these inferior clergy men, you think the chor episcopi to be most regarded; I will eafily fatisfie you concerning their small right to pass a decisive voice in general councils: If you have either the councils, or the sum of them by Carranza, you shall find in the decrees of pope Damasus, as ancient as he is, how being asked (Epist. 4.) whether the chor-episcopi were any thing in the church of God or nothing? and what authority they had in the church? and he anfwers, that they were nothing in the church of god, in which they had no authority, and that their inflitution was wicked, and too too bad, and contrary to the facred canons, and the peace of the whole church; And therefore, he defined that all was vain and void. that they bad done in the episcopal function. And that for those causes, they were forbidden both by the facred Seat (of Rome) and by all the bishops of the World. It follows, How that in the primitive church, these chor-cpiscopi did seem necessary for the peculiar care they bad over the poor, and the by ordination, they were only priests, they presumed at last to exercise many things belonging to bishops to confecrate sub-deacons, and deacons, &c. But their ambition was foon curbed by the church; and bishops were severely forbidden to lay any part of their Episcopal Function upon them. I say then, that only bishops have right in a general council. For of these prelates only it was said, He that will not bear the church, let bim be unto thee as a publican or beathen. To them only it was said; go and teach all nations, and Lo I am with you until the end of the world. To them all those special promises of divine assistance were made.

made, which I urged Sect. 15. N. 17. None of these are directed to laics, or inferior clergy men, who succeeded the disciples and not the Apostles.

o. Ob. 6. Wheather these bishops assembled (with their head and chief pastor) be so absolutely infallible, that they cannot determin falfely in point of faith, let them do what they will? I anfwer, that as I shewed Sect. 19. N. 1. 2. they are to regulate themselves according to scripture and tradition, discussing carefully what has been reveal'd to the church by these means, concerning the points which they treat of. See the place I cited, and you will fee how notoriously manifest their proceedings must needs be, but they must be the Judges, and not we, that they have done their duty, in regulating themselves according to those two infallible rules; yet we are secur'd that they have done their duty, both by the notorious publicity of the fact, and by their subscriptions to the legal carriage of all that affentially concerns the being of a true council, and also by seeing no considerable part of the church diffused, refuse their decrees. Fear not you to do, what you fee all the church do, with fo universal a confent: neither will I press you to consent, until you first the this general confent go before you. Were there any notorious neglect of legal proceeding to the introducing of error; the whole church repre-Entative and diffusive, would never be permitted by God, to submit cheerfully thereunto. I might ask, how shall I know the scripture writers, did their duty in obeying divine inspiration? If they did not, adieu all faith.

termin aright? what is requir'd to a fynodical constitution? must all concur in the Vote, or will the major part serve the turn? I answer, you shall know all these things to have been done

as they should be, by seeing that all have fubscrib'd to the council as proceeding legally in her constitutions, which also you may stay to see accepted by the church for lawful decrees. When you fee this done, without any confiderable contradiction, I hope you will think you may prudently submit, and cannot but imprudently stand out any longer. And for you particular, we will condescend to you to stand out so long. When you are to be so leading a man of whole provinces, that your fubmission would be required before any of theirs, it will be a longer work to tell you all belonging to your duty. What belongs to you at present, I have told you in order to practice. The constant practice of the church, has sufficently inform'd the leading men governors of the church. how they are to proceed in doing that which fo many ages have practifed before them.

11. Ob. 8. What makes a general council: must all the bishops of the world be called? I anfwer, that makes a general council, which has ever fince the primitive church, ferved to make all the general councils which have been made. Look on the first council in the apostles time, and you will find not all the apostles, but only Peter, James, John, Paul, and Barnaby present. See Baron. An. 51. And yet their Decrees fent to all churches, did bear this preface, It has feemed good to the Holy Gooft and us. In the four first councils (which your English church admits) the fourth part of the bishops was never present, and in the councils kept in the East, few bishops appear'd from the West. and to the councils kept in the West, few bishops came commonly from the East The practice of the church (the best interpreter of divine laws) teacheth, that it sufficeth that all who can conveniently be called and summon'd, do appear, and that fuch a competent number appear and fet in caupoll. council, as those (who are assembled together with their head) judge sufficient on the one side; and on the other side, that those who be not present, knowing well enough (as we see by experience of the appearance made in parliament, how all men know how great or little it is) those I say, knowing how great or little the appearance of bishops is in the council, say nothing against it, but silently consent to permit them to proceed as a sufficient Representative of the church, and accordingly admit of their decrees when they are made.

12. Ob. 9. Whether it be a lawful council if all come not who are called: I have made my answer already, That it is sufficient that a sufficient number comes that is, a number approved for sufficient by the church, in the manner I now expressed.

13. Ob. 10. Who must call the general council? the pope, or christian Kings and emperors? and how shall I be affured which of them must? I anfwer, that it is evident out of scripture, that there is no divine institution, by which either emperors or Kings be affur'd to be still found in the world; or that (when they have that dignity) they be by divine institution, invested with a power to call councils. We feek for this divine institution this we will not admit, until it can be shewed in scripture or tradition. The fact of calling, shews not divine institution. secondly, as for the prelates of the church, we can shew divine institution, AA. 20. 28. bishops placed by the Hely Ghost over all the flock, to feed or govern the church of God. And 4. Epbes. Not lay Magistrates, but only ecclesiastical, are said to be be given us by christ for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying the body of christ that bence forth we may not be caried about with every wind of Dostrine, &c. Thirdly, the Emperor is not by divine institution lord of the christian world, no, nor of any considerable part of

it; wherefore, feeing that a motive power is no. motive power any further than it can or ought to be able to move, the imperial power, which neither can nor ought to move further then it reigns, cannot confequently command any further than his territory at the uttermost. The power of the chief pastor of the universal church, is co-extended to the universal church. All bishops of the univerfal church being to be moved, must be moved by fuch a power as this is. If emperors called councils, it was not by any ecclefiaftical calling (fuch an one as the pope called them by at the very felf fame time) but the empero's calling was only political proceeding from a temporal power, subserving to the ecclefiastical, and not able to force them by censure, in case of refusing to come, as the ecclefiaftical power could, which power implored the Imperial affistance to concur with her, only for the more effectual execution perhaps fometimes emperors might venture to call dependently of the ratification of the supream pastor, which they prefum'd, would be eafily obtain'd in so just necessities, as then feem'd to press for a speedy remedy. If emperors or Kings were present in council, it was only by their presence and good countenance to honour, encourage and further the procedings of the council, and not to pass their Vote in points of belief. 14. Ob. 11. How far are the councils determinations infallible? whether in matters of Fact as well as faith? I answer, that they are infallible only in matters of faith. Matters of fact have no ground for their having been done fo, or not done fo, either in scripture or tradition; wherefore concerning matters of fact, the church rules her self by no former revelation, and she pretends to no new revelations, but only to declare clearly what she finds to have before been reveal'd. The infallibility was thus promifed to the church, He Mall shall teach you all things, and suggest all things whatfoever I shall say unto you. Things of fact are said and testified only by men, therefore not objects of faith.

15. Ob. 12. Whether in these matters of faith, the church be infallible in fundamentals only? I answer, that in all the authorities which I cited for the infallibility of the church out of scripture, Sect. 14. N. 3. &c. and 15. I shewed that they are groundlessly restrain'd to only fundamentals in the sense you mean. The same was proved by my rea-

fons, Sect. 16.

points are Fundamental, what not? I answer, This question may pose those who will be restraining the general promises of infallible assistance made to the church, to fundamental points only; that is, unto they themselves, know not what. But to us catholics, all is fundamental, which is made appear, to be proposed to us by the church as a verity revealed by god, whether it be in a matter more or less im-

porting of its own nature.

17. Ob. 14. How shall I know in time of schifm. when there be two popes or more, which of these is St. Peters true succeffor? I answer, That this Question, as explicated by you, is put very unskilfully. For you pass from arguing against the infallibility of a Pope, as defining with a council, to argue against those divines who deliver not the churches belief, but their private Opinion to be. that the pope should be held infallible out of a council; concerning which opinion, I have shewed it already to be impertinent to our purpose Your objection against us should be put thus, the church (with us) is held to be the pope defining with a coupoil: but in time of schisms, where there'be more pretended popes, we do not affuredly know that he who defines with the council, is the true pope, or fucce for

fuccessor of St. Peter. And then I answer thus, if before the calling and meeting of the council, there be more than one pretending to be popes, that he shall ever be esteem'd the right pope, to whom the prelates of the church shall unanimously obey when he calls them to meet in a general council, and in this council to prefide over them. To have two fuch popes (as these are) at one time, is impossible, And this is the only time in which a pope defines with a lawful council. What you fay of popes not defining in such a council, is not our case. Put me a pope defining with a lawful council, and then prove him fallible if you can. Whether the popes definitions out of a council be fallible or infallible, makes nothing to this purpofe. Only this is evident, if they be infallible out of a council, they be infallible in a council in all Opinions. I add with Bellarmin, Lib. 2. de Conciliu, Cap. 19. That altho a council without a pope cannot define any article of faith, yet in time of schism, it can judge which is true pope, and provide the church of a true pastor, if she had none; who thus provided by the councils authority, may dissolve the council if he pleafeth; or if he pleafe to have them remain affembled, they remain fo now by his authority, and can define as well as other councils call'd by the pope. In that meeting in which the pope was to be chosen, or declar'd the undoubted pope, the prelates of the church might and ought to meet upon their own authority and affemble themselves.

18. Ob. 15. suppose all agree on the pope, and a general council meet, how shall I be sure that he, who is accounted pope, is so indeed; for Simonie makes him none; and that he was not simoniacal is impossible for me to know? and then you labour to prove, that Sixtus Quintus was notoriously simoniacal, which makes nothing to our purpose: neither follows it from hence, that those, who being

made

made cardinals by him, came afterwards to be popes, were no true popes. For you are too iga Man may be a true pope, who never was a cardinal. To that which is pertinent, I answer, that tho' he, whose election to the popedom is Simoniacal, may be depos'd, as having obtained that dignity unlawfully, yet, as all jurists say, the crown once obtained supplies all defects; so I may far better fay, that this defect being only against ecclesiasti-cal Laws, may be supplied so, that of an illegal pope, he may be afterward made a lawful one. For in the church diffusive there is power to have this man pope if they will; and that they will they testifie when they obey his summons, calling all bishops to a council, and permitting him, as their head, to preside, and as supreme pastor to define in the council. Lastly, by the churches admission of the council I know the council, and confequently, the pope was as legal as is necessary. 19. 0b. 16. How shall I know that those bishops, who with the pope make up the council be bishops indeed. For no bishops, no council. Now if he, who ordain'd them, when he gave orders did not intend to give them those orders (and whether he did or no God only knows) then they be no bishops. I answer, that if they be bishops I am bound to admit their decrees, and as he should fin damnably, who would not honour fuch a man, held by all men to be his true Father, because it is impossible for him to know that his mother did not lie when she said so, or to know whether it be not the devil in his fathers shape, so I should sin damnably in not acknowledging by due obedience these to be true fathers of Gods people, who are efteem'd so by all the World upon far better ground than such a man is esteem'd your father For first, those who ordain bishops or priests be for the

the most part men most eminent in the church. How is it then morally possible, that many fuch men should just happen, in so many several places of the world, just to be the ordainers of just such bishops, as should be in the church just at that time, (which commonly is not above once in a hundred years) when a council is call'd? again. there are more than three thousand bishops at a time in the church (as witnesseth Alb. Rof. Rubric. ff. de flatu omnium) out of which number we fee that it is very rare for more than three hundred to be affembled at a council, which is but every tenth bishop; now morally impossible is it that just every tenth bishop should happen just to be that bishop who goes to the council from this part of the world (where in an age no one bishop was ever heard of to be thus invalidly ordained) and that just at the fame time there should come from another part of the world (where fuch an abominable ordination is as unheard of as in this part) another bishop. whose ill chance it was to be thus ordained. And thus from a third, fourth, fifth, fixth part of the World, just such bishops should come in a number fufficient to make the number of other true bishops unfufficient for a true council. Surely this is a thing far more morally impossible, than that the commonwealth of England should ever happen to have a full parliament of Knights and burgeffes freely cholen, to the number of three hundred, who should not only be all of them baftards; but also all of them call'd John. This I prove evidently; because to confer holy orders, or baptize without a due intention, is not only a fin most abominable and damnable, but it is such a fin as brings with it neither pleafure nor profit, nor any thing which may the least intice any ordinary man, much less bishops and priests to commit a fin fo hideous, and fo unprofitable; wherefore from Christs time to this I do not think that the most

most knowing man upon earth does know to produce fix examples of the committing of this fin-But on the other fide, no man knows fo little, but he has knowledge enough to tell him, without any rash judgment, that it is an ordinary thing in every country and city of England to find divers known bastards, and that the number of the unknown is ten times as great. And again, the name of John is the most common of all names; wherefore confidering the nature of things, it is far from all impossibility that many of these bastards should be call'd by this name. And their bastardism not being known, the election may fall upon them in this country; and what happens in this country may happen in another, and so in all at once. Weaker far than this is your argument, and yet, how secure would all men think England from all mifery, if we were all fully affur'd that no mifery should fall upon this nation until we did chance to have a free parliament, confisting of three hundred men, of which every one should be a bastard and every one call'd John? It is great want of folidity in judgment in fo many sharp-witted men, to esteem so much such a weak argument. And this is true prescinding from all special providence of almighty God over his church; but the least thought of that providence makes this light objection vanish into smoke, and together with it the next objection. For how easily could God put it efficaciously in the minds of true bishops to meet in a sufficient number; and when I fee the church universal admit such a council to be a true one. I hence know that it had a sufficient number of true bishops.

30. Ob. 17. How shall I know that the pope and Bishops assembled are christains, &c. Here you discourse just as before and the same answer answers you to the full, Yet for a further answer

to both, I will shew how wife your argument is. by framing just another like to it thus. O christians! how do you infallibly know that in these fixteen ages fince the age of writing the bible, the devil in some one age did not intice as many men as were fufficient to corrupt the bible, for I cannot fee but that the devil might eafily make fo many promifes far more inticing than any ordinary motive which should move men to baptize a child in a false form, or with want of due intention? with fuch promifes then the devil might intice those who did write out the bible, to write false, just in such and such places as he should suggest to them, fo that in the space of a few ages, the multitude of the falle copies made them pals for the only true ones; and how know we infallibly. that this might not have been done much after that age in which the devil incited the tyrants to force all christians to give up their bibles to be burnt, by which means the true copies growing scarce, false ones might possibly be brought into common use by the malice of the devil, as has been faid? and this example defeats also your next objection. Does the divine providence sleep in this manner?

21. Ob. 18. How shall we know certainly that these are the determinations of the council? salse canons may be soisted in, and salse copies may be vented. I answer, that what has, or has not been decreed by a council, may as well, and far better be known certainly, than what has been decreed by one of our parliaments; for councils are so much more notified to all, because they are the parliaments not of one, but of all catholic nations, and so their deeds are more public. Now how intolerable a caveller were he in a commonwealth, who should plead the not obliging of parliamentary decrees, by reason of the impossibility to know

for certain what was decreed, and which were the true copies of the true decrees? you would perswade us, that we cannot be sure of that of which we fee by daily experience we may be made as fure as we would wish. The decrees of councils are publicly read, in the council publicly fubscrib'd and Seal'd by the council. The original of these subscriptions carefully preserv'd, the copies first fet forth before divers witnesses are conferr'd with the original with a public testimony (as you may see at the end of any bull) that it agrees with the original. Those, who in great number, were present at the making of the decrees do own them; no one in the church disclaims from them, and in case any should, satisfaction would presently be given. Our very adversaries write against us for decreeing such and such things; the fact is never deny'd, but ever defended. If in any press, a salse copie should be fet forth, you will have prohibition after prohibition, and penalty added to penalty, until those copies be suppress'd; and all books would be noting, and notifying this forgery: as we fee in our church by daily experience in matters of less consequence, as in setting forth the decrees of cardinals, the decisions of that Roman court call'd the Rota, or any other thing of this nature. These evidences make every one know these decrees with an unquestionable credibility, which when we have, we are sufficiently furnished, for as much as concerns the proposing of the object to embrace with our Will these decrees as proceeding from the Holy Ghoft, and teaching verities reveal'd by god, upon which we immoveably fix our understanding, and we are resolv'd by our will to fix it so firmly, because (by Gods grace) we have a will to proceed prudently in so importent an affair as the falvation of our foul, to which

which heaven is offer'd if the will submit to believe what God thus reveals; and Hell is threatned if the will not thus submit. And this offer and threats are as prudently to be regarded, as certain as english-men prudently believe, that there is such a city as London. Nothing then which is not most rational is requir'd of us, it being most manifestly made credible, that this is the true command of God. Mad therefore is that foul, which will not fubmit. See what I said in the former Section from the fifth Number to the end. And also what I fully express'd, Sect. 16. N. 6. For that which you add of forging a canon of the council of Nice. I doubt not but you may twenty times have met with a fatisfactiory Answer thereunto. See Baronius or Spondan. An. 419. N. 13. Tell me, do forged Scriptures make the true books of Scrip-

ture to become fallible?

22. Ob. 19. How shall I be affur'd of the meaning of the true Decrees when I now know them? For learned Men have been of contrary opinions about the meaning of them? I answer, That to ease your tender Conscience, we will permit your not to give your affent to any thing, of which you are not in conscience manifestly perfwaded that this, and only this, is the true meaning of fuch a council; fo that you be ready prepar'd in Mind and Heart to Submit to the true meaning, when you shall come manifestly to know it. To more than this we press no body; only let not people fain that they do not know what they know, or eafily may know if they will: You must observe, that councils use to be affembled against fuch and fuch known opinions of fectaries; against these they frame their decrees so clearly, that the sectaries themselves cannot find impudency enough to deny their opinions to be clearly condemn'd, and the contrary clearly defin'd: wherefore * fore we see by experience they never so much as offer to do this; but all their Forces are bent to cry down and vilifie the Authority, by which they were condemn'd. Some other passages in councils may be found to be of an ambigous sense, and until those passages be by public authority further declar'd, we hold no Man an heretic for not taking them in the sense which some men are most inclin'd to conceive them to be spoken. Hence appears the great benefit it is to have a living judge, to whom all that is doubtful may be referr'd, and a clear declaration procur'd, as it is expressly noted in the very end of the Council of Trent.

23. Ob. 20. What necessity of an infallible judge at all? I answer first, Who assur'd you that God would give no prerogative to his church which is not precifely necessary for her very prefervation? Dr. Fern professeth such a judge would be of fingular benefit for the keeping of unity in the church, and the ending all controversies. See what I faid, Sect. 18. N. 2. I have also shew'd the great necessity of this judge, Sect. 1. N. 4. &c. True it is, during the most bloody Perfecution of the first 300 years, the christian World could not enjoy this benefit: But I pray note what St. Isidore says, Præfat. in fuam canonum collectionem; where having observ'd what I now faid of the Perfecutions hindering the keeping of the councils, he adds, That bence christianity was torn into diverse beresies, because license was not given to the bishops to meet in councils until the time of the foresaid Emperor (Constantine:) And yet for the first three hundred years tradition of all points necessary, could not but be so fresh as to make a far less necessity of councils than afterward, when Herefies had so opposed the first traditions. But an infinite number flicking close to those traditions were

not only fav'd, but were glorious Martyrs in those

first three ages.

24. Thus having answer'd your twenty questions pertinent to the Point of infalliblity, I come to give you fatisfaction in an objection wholly impertinent to this purpose. For it concerns not any article defin'd by our church, but private opinions of some private divines in our church, whose opinions (tho' never fo erroneous) ought not to hinder your conversion, if you were in earnest. Yet even in this I hope to give you satisfaction. Your objection then is, P. 16. out of Dr. Taylor, endeavouring to prove our inconfiftency with civil government, because some of our divines teach, that which one or two, or some few of our Doctors fay is lawful, may in our judgments, be done without mortal fin: But not only one. but many of our doctors fay 'tis lawful to murder or depofe a supreme magistrate that is guilty of Herefie, or suspected of it; therefore Cavete Principes Conclusionem, fay you; but according to truer logic you should say Cavete Principes Herefim. I answer First, this objection makes nothing against our Faith, but against private opinions of private divines, which opinions he who will practife must expect public execution, which is so terrible. that it fecures princes more than any preachers frighting them with fear of fin. Secondly, I do nothing doubt but even those divines would so limit. and restrain their loose opinion to such peculiar circumstances, as would prefently clear, even their opinion from being the least inconfistent with the prefent government: Besides our chearful willingness to take any oath, and enter into any bond, obliging us to the loss of all that in this World can be lost, if ever we fo much as attempt the putting this opinion in practice, which cheerful willingness I am fure you will find in any Roman catholic friend you have or can have in England. But I R dare

dare boldly say, that those very Doctors never intended to spake of the lawfulness of murdering any heretical King, or governor in a country, where that which they call Heresie, did already overwhelm the whole Nation. I say nothing of their other many Restrictions. As that the Heresie of such a Prince if he lives will certainly ruin his country. That his country will certainly be perserved by his death, and no other way. And that for certain, by killing him no very great inconveniences will follow. All these, and other Restrictions even those Authors will require.

25. Again, protestants, and those whom they own for their brethren, have far more loofe principles than these are, utter'd even by their prime apostles of their reformation. You own the Wicleffians for Brethren; they all believe that every magistrate do's truly forfeit his authority by sinning. You own Luther for your prime patriarch. and Calvin for his second: the first is notoriously known to have preached rebellion, and to have faid that the gospel is not gospel except it be divulged with tumults; and Calvin speaks thus Cap. 6. in Daniel. v. 22. 25. Earthly princes do bereave themselves of Authority, when they erect themselves against god, and we must rather spit in their Faces than obey them. See Beza de Jure Magi-firatuum in Subditos: To say nothing of a world of others which might be cited, whom you hold not to have Erred fundamentally in true Religion, and confequently thefe their errors not to be damnable. And the author of the End to controversies has lately in his preface shewed in particular, how in every place but England your new reform was brought in by rebellion. And Dr. Fern Sect. 16. fays, those churches bad but tumultuary reformations.

26. Having now complied with your defire.

I might claim the performance of your promise,

the -

but I know Gods grace must rather be earnest-ly begged, then you earnestly pressed. Lay prejudice afide, with other human respects, and pray humbly to know the truth; and than by gods grace, that may be done, without which you will be eternally undone.

Sect. 25.

The Roman church baving been proved to be our infallible Judge, all under pain of damnation are bound to submit to ber fudgment.

1. I N my first question I proved (N. 1.) that I there must be some certain and assured means to end all controversies or doubts, which either be or can be in Religion. And (N. 3.) I proved that all must needs agree in this, that our understanding must be bound, under pain of dam-nation, to submit it self to that infallible judge or rule appointed by god to decide all necessary controversies. Now, because all faith essentially confifts in the inward understanding (which is the very feat of true or false faith) God who looks into our interior foul, exacts to fee in that a ready imbracing of that faith, without which no falvation is to be had: and therefore, as I faid, he should not seriously defire our salvation unless he defired that we interiorly should yield full affent to this one, and only faving faith, of which faith the apostle said, that without it, it was imposfible to please God, and St. Mark, be who do's not believe shall be damned. A false faith, taking the belief of a Lie for a Divine verity, can help to fave nobody. All then to please God, and to befaved must have true faith, which essentially confisting in the interior judgment, God would have this judgment readily to submit to the direction, or determination of that infallible judge which was appointed by him as the only means to bring us affuredly to this one true faith. I earnesly intreat R 2

the reader to read the proof of all this in the place

above cited, and Sect. 16. N. 10.

2. All this interior submission of understanding, to be due even to all that is faid in the bible, and that even under pain of damnation, will easily be granted by any Sectary, holding the bible to be that only rule and direction which God has given every one, as the only means to bring him affuredly to the true faith: we chatholics do no less readily than they, submit to the bible as to Gods word; but from the beginning to the ending of the Second question, we have brought a world of evident and most convincing reasons, proving that the scripture by it self alone, cannot be the only means appointed us by God to bring us to the affured knowledge of the true faith necessary to falvation; neither can it by it felf alone, end and decide all controversies about such matters of belief and practice as are wholly necessary to salvation: this I have shewed in above four and twenty particular points; whence it follows, that God has appointed some other means for our certain and affured guidance in all these things. This other means I have proved, through all my third question, to be the infallible direction of the church; and then I passed to shew at large (through all my fourth question) that this church, whose direction is infallible, is the Roman church. taking the Roman church as containing all that whole flock of Christs sheep adhering to the bishop of Rome, as to their head pastor, in what place of the world foever they live. I have shewed the traditions of this church to be infallible. I have shewed the decrees or definitions fet forth in any lawful general council of this church to be infallible. Nothing of this I have suppos'd, but every particular here specifi'd I largely prov'd, fo that I do not here, without having first given full proof, Suppose this Roman church to be infallible. 3. This

3. This then suppos'd, I do not see how our very adversaries (convinced of the former Points) can deny that all fubmission, interior, and exterior, must of necessity be yielded to this church. whose directions be infalible, and secured by the affistance of the Holy Ghost from all kind of error; for; on the one fide, there cannot be imagin'd the least fear of falling into any error, by following our guide, who is prov'd to be fecure from leading into error; and on the other fide, this fecurity from error, proceeding from the promifed affistance of the Holy Ghost, given to the church purposely to direct all her chidren, in all points of that faith which God exacts of all to please him. and to work their Salvation by it; and this direction being also the only safe and secure means which he has given us to this end, it is manifest that we fin damnably if we refuse to follow it. First, because it is a damnable fin not to submit to that order of government which the divine providence has by his wisdom and also his sovereign authority appointed unto all for their direction: For (as we at large shewed out of St. Auflin, Sect. 21. N. 5.) if God should give a man commission to direct us in such points, unto which he would have all to conform, he who should refuse to submit to the direction of this man, should be guilty of damnable disobedience. not so much towards this man, as towards God who gave that commission to this man; so.God (according to what has been proved) having given commission to the church to decide and determin all our controversies in faith, and to direct us in all things necessary to salvation, as well in belief as practice, to stand out against the church, and not to fubmit to this order appointed by God, is a most damnable sin of refractory disobedience.

4. Secondly, we have no stricter obligation impos'd by the Law of charity towards our own R 3 felves

felves, than to procure that last end for which we were created to-wit, the eternal Salvation of our fouls: we are fure this cannot be done, but by pleafing God, who is not pleas'd but by our profession of that only one true faith, of which it is faid, without faith it is impossible to please God, Heb. 11. 6. And be (who with this true faith) believes not. shall be damn'd, Mark 16. 16. He then, who will not take pains and care to fee himself securely fetled in this true faith (fo wholly necessary to Salvation) is damnably guilty of uncharitableness towards his own foul; whose greatest and eternal good he neglects to procure, by neglecting to procure the only means of true faith, by which it can only be attained. And let no body fay this means is too hard to be procured by me, for I am no scholar, but a poor ignorant creature. This will not excuse you, for God knew well enough, that the far greater part of those whom he created for eternal falvation, and oblig'd to work the same with fear and trembling, and for whom he died, shedding the last drop of his blood, so to purchase a greater plenty of graces for them; this God, I say, knew well enough, that the greater part of those, for which he died and suffered fo much, were poor ignorant people; and therefore he had been no earnest lover of fouls, if he had not ordain'd fome means fo easie, even to the ignorant, that they thereby might effectually be brought to that true faith, which he fo rigorously exacts of all under pain of damnation. This means, and this only means, I have prov'd at large to be the infallible guidance and direction of the church, whose traditions and decrees in all points necessary are so inculcated by every preacher and catechift of this church, that it is impossible for any one, desirous of instruction, to live in ignorance of them; imposible to live according to them, and not to be faved. For this Commandment which

which I command thee this day, is not bidden from thee, neither is it far off; It is not in beaven, that thou flouldest fay, who floall go up for us to Heaven. and bring it down unto us, that we may bear it and do it? Neither is it beyond the Sea, that thou shouldest say, who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may bear it, and do it? but the word is very nigh unto thee, Deutr. 30. 11. We exact not the knowledge of the greek and hebrew. and the use of near twenty rules more, as I have shewed our adversaries to do, Sea. 7. N. 6 But we exact only the following this fo known direction of the church, A way so direct that no fool can err in it. And we having so groundedly feen that this is the direction given us by God to follow, we do not proceed blindly by following it with all fubmission; but no blindness is greater than in an unknown way, through which, of necessity we must pass at our eternal peril if we miss to refuse the following of an infallible guide provided for us, and offer'd to us in this passage, and rather to yield our selves over to a confess'd fallible direc-What greater blindness?

5. Dr. Fern indeed, and protestants discourse otherwise of the submission due to the church; but it is upon the falle supposition that she is fallible; without they mean to discourse only of their own church, and then they may truly suppose her as fallible as they please; and she being so fallible. they most unreasonably are still exacting of us even by most rigorous sequestration of all our estates. and by what other penalties they think fit, to leave that church which we fo groundedly hold to be the only infallible guide appointed us by God himself, as the only means to direct us fecurely to our eternal falvation, and to yield exterior conformity to their own new moulded church, which they all confess and profess to be fallible; which is to say, you must be undone in your estate, without you conform conform your felves to that new reformation of ours, which perhaps is true. For we do not challenge infallible truth to what we teach, we being fallible men, and our interpretations of Gods word being only fallible; yet infallibly we will undo you, if you will not follow us; and yet if you do follow us perbaps you may be undone eternally; for we cannot fay, that our church is infallible in what the teacheth contrary to yours. She may therefore deceive you to imbrace a lie for a divine verity: for you must be forced to imbrace a doctrine deduced by fallible interpretations out of scripture. which interpretations the far greater and the far learneder part of this present age rejects as Heretical, and which as fuch were rejected by almost all visible christianity for this last thousand years, and which will perhaps shortly be rejected by us. For it is ordinary with us (I speak what truly protestants may speak) to reject that to day which yesterday we cried up for a divine verity.

6. Now all this being so truly spoken, I do not see what needs more to be spoken to vindicate and justify our most just recusancy in refusing to submit to so preposterous proceedings of men, when they, providing us no better security, enforce us to refuse due submission to that infallible direction of the holy Catholic church, most orderly appointed by God to bring us securely to that end for which he made us: to which God of his infinite

mercy vouchsafe to bring us all.

7. And thus having ended what I had to fay of this most important matter, I must crave my readers pardon for enlarging myself so diffusely. For I am wholly of the mind of that dear friend of St. Austin called Nebridius, who was used to say, that in a great question be bated a short answer, Aug. Tom. 1. Epist. 23. ad Bonif. Wherefore in this Question of Questions brevity might well be accounted hateful.

